Elijah's nunc Dimittis.

OR

The Authors own Funerall

SERMONS,

In his Meditations upon 1 *Kings* 19. 4.

It is now enough: Lord take away my Soule, for I am no better then my Fathers.

Where also is Treated:

Of the immortality of the Soule.
Of the State of it, when seperated from the Body.
Of the Destruction of this lower World by Fire.
Of Local-Hell, with the graduall Torments thereof.
Of the Heavens, of the Superiour World, and the Inhabitants of them, their happiness and glory.

By *Thomas Bradley*, D. D. one of his late Majesties Chaplains, and Præbendary of *York*, and Preach't in the Minster there, and in his Rectory of *Ackmorth*, 1669. *Ætatis suæ*, 72.

Oxon. Exon.

Lord now let thy Servant depart in peace, that mine Eyes may see thy Salvation.

Sic sic juvat ire sub umbras.

YORK, Printed by *Stephen Bulkley*, 1669.

Fol. 4.

Elijah's nunc Dimittis.

OR

The Authors own Funerall

SERMONS,

In his Meditations upon 1 Kings 19. 4.

It is now enough: Lord take away my Soule, for I am no better than my Fathers.

Where also is Treated:

Of the immortality of the Soule.
Of the state of it, when separated from the Body.
Of the Gestation of this lower World by Sin.
Of Lord and with the gradual remembrance.
Of my Honours, of the Superior World, and the Subsistence of them, their happiness.

BRITISH MUSEUM

By Thomas Bl[illegible] one of his late Majesties Chap[illegible] Prebendary of York; and Preacher [illegible] there and in his Rectory of [illegible], 1660. Ætatis suæ, 72.

Lord now let thy Servant depart in peace, that mine [illegible] may see thy Salvation.

Sic ille juvat sic sub umbras.

YORK, Printed by Stephen Bulkley, 1659

d 4 —

Elijah's *Nunc Dimittis*;

Or, The Authors own Funerall Sermon,

In his Meditation upon the 1 *Kings* 19. 4. the latter end of the *Verse*,

It is now enough, Lord take away my Soule, for I am no better then my Fathers.

THese Words are the Complaint, or the Petition, or the Suite, the Wish, or Request, (call it what you will) of the Prophet *Elijah*, now *weary of his Life*, and *desiring he might dye*; The causes and occasion of it, you may reade in the context, and in the Chapter immediately precedent, where ye have the whole narration of the business, the sum of all you finde in the 14th. verse of this Chapter: *I have been very zealous for the Lord God of Hosts, because the Children of Israel have forsaken thy Covenant, cast down thine Altars, and Slaine thy Prophets with the sword, and I onely am left, and they seek my*

life to take it away. That wicked woman *Jezabell*, (in revenge of her Chaplains, *the Priests of Baal*, which he had lately so clearly, and so powerfully convinc't and silenc't, and proved to be false Prophets) had sworn his death, Warrants are seal'd, and Pursuivants sent out to take him: Upon this, the Prophet flies for his life as farr as to *Beersheba*, the utmost border of all *Israel* on the South, as *Dan* was on the North; yet not thinking himselfe secure there neither, though at so great a distance, he takes a farther flight, a dayes Journey into the Wilderness, supposing haply he might finde more kindnes there among the wild beasts, then amongst men in *Samaria* more savage then they: But here he meets with another enemy, as dangerous as any of the rest, *Hunger and Thirst*, in danger to pine and perish through famine, his fear and hast, not allowing him either time or means to furnish himselfe with *viaticum* for such a Voyage, nor the barren wilderness affording him supplies of sustenance in such a want. The Prophet now compast about with so many deaths and dangers, and not knowing which way to turn himself, hungry and thirsty, faint and weary, layes him down under a *Juniper Tree*, wishing, *That might might be the end of his Pilgrimage, and with his Pilgrimage, of his Life too.* Here

in

in this Wilderneſs he makes his Will; Wherein, firſt, He bequeaths his ſoule to God that gave it; *Lord take away my ſoule*, his body to the Earth from whence 'twas taken, wiſhing, That ſpot of ground upon which he lay, might be his Grave, the *Juniper Tree* over him his Monument, with no other Inſcription upon it, but onely this inſtead of an Epitaph, *I am no better then my Fathers. It is now enough, Lord take away my ſoule, for I am no better then my Fathers.*

In the Diviſion of the Text, I ſhall not uſe any curioſity at all, the words neither require, nor admit it. For the ſumme of them, you may call them if you pleaſe, in old *Simeons* Language, *The Prophet* Elijah's *nunc Dimittis*; Or in St. *Pauls*, his *Cupio diſſolvi.* In it theſe Parcels.

Firſt, The *Dimittis* it ſelf, in theſe word, *Lord take away my Soule.*

Secondly, Two Reaſons perſwading him to make this his Suite at this time: The one prefixt, and ſet before the *Dimittis*, in theſe words, *Nunc ſatis eſt, It is now enough.* The other annext, and following after it, in theſe words, *Nam non ſum melior majoribus meis, For I am no better then my Fathers.*

In all reaſon, we muſt begin firſt with the former Reaſon, both becauſe it ſtands firſt in the

Text; and becauſe it ſtands in our way to the *Nunc Dimittis*; and becauſe it is a motive uſhering it in, therefore of it firſt, of *Nunc ſatis eſt*, before of *Nunc Dimittis*: *It is now enough.*

And *Elijah's ſatis eſt*, may be reaſonably grounded upon theſe four Conſiderations; or in four reſpects might he well ſay, *It is now enough.*

1. *In reſpect of what he had ſeen.*
2. *In reſpect of what he had ſuffered.*
3. *In reſpect of what he had done.*
4. *In reſpect of the years he had lived.*

In all theſe reſpects, the Prophet might reaſonably ſay, *Nunc ſatis eſt, It is now enough*; As if he ſhould ſay, *Lord I have ſeen enough to make me weary of this World*; *And I have ſuffered enough to make me weary of my Life*: *And I have done enough in the faithfull diſcharge of my duty in the Office of a Prophet, whereunto I was called*: *And I have lived long enough, even to deſire to live no longer in this wretched World*; *therefore now Lord, I beſeech yee diſmiſs me, Lord take away my Soule.* So here are four *enoughs*, and they are all grounded in the 14. *verſe* of this *Chapter*, and in this *Text*. For firſt, He complains there, *The Children of* Iſrael *have forſaken thy Covenant, broke down thine Altars, and Slaine thy Prophets with the Sword*: There's his *Satis Vidi, I have ſeen enough.*

Secondly,

Secondly, He complains, *That he onely is left, and they ſeek his Life to take it away:* There's his *Satis Tuli, I have ſuffered enough.*

Thirdly, *I have been Zealous for the Lord God of Hoſts:* There's his *Satis Feci, I have done enough.*

Fourthly, Thoſe three things before mentioned, which he had *Seen*, which he had *Suffered*, and which he had *Done*, were not the worke of a ſhort time; they were the worke of many years; he was now grown old under his ſufferings, and doing his Duty, and ſo willing to follow the Generation of his Fathers, *For I am no better then my Fathers:* There's his *Satis Vixi.* And in all theſe reſpects he concludes, *It is now enough*, and begs for a diſmiſſion, *Lord take away my Soule.*

To all theſe *enoughs*, we ſhall ſpeak ſomething briefly, with the inferences from them: And firſt of his *Satis Vidi, I have ſeen enough:* That is, (as himſelf Interprets himſelf, *ver.* 14.) of the wickedneſs, irreligion, profaneneſs, and Idolatry of the times and places that he lived in, to make him weary of the world, and of his life: And that is the firſt ground of this his requeſt to Almighty God, to take away his Soule.

The inference from hence is this:

That to live in evill times and places where iniquity

iniquity doth abound, is to pious Souls, and to ſuch as fear God, matter of great grieſe and ſorrow of heart, even enough to make them weary, not onely of thoſe times and places, but even of their Lives too. St. *Peter* tells us of *Lot* dwelling in *Sodom*, *That his righteous Soule was vext from day to day with their unlawfull doings*, 2 Pet. 2. 7. 8. The holy Prophet *David* complains in this caſe, and bewails his hard condition in this reſpect, even in paſſionate expreſſions, *Woe is me that I am conſtrained to dwell in* Meſech, *and to have my habitation among the Tents of* Kedar. And the Prophet *Habakkuk*, as paſſionately as he, in the ſame caſe, *Hab.* 1. 2, 3, 4. *O Lord, how long ſhall I cry, and thou wilt not heare! yea, even cry out of violence, and thou wilt not help? Why doſt thou ſhew me iniquity, and cauſe me to behold ſorrow? for the Law is diſſolved, and judgment doth not goe forth: the wicked doth compaſs about the righteous: therefore unjuſt judgement doth proceed.* Thus we ſee how righteous ſouls are affected in theſe caſes, and afflicted with grief and ſorrow under the ſence of the wickedneſſes, & abominations that are committed under the Sunne, in the times and places where they live. *Reaſons.*

1. Becauſe hereby God is diſhonoured, whoſe glory is dear unto them.

2. The

2. The Church is ſcandalized, holy Religion reproached, the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt aſperſed, and the way of God evill ſpoken of, eſpecially if theſe things be done, and ſuffered in a Chriſtian Church, or Common-wealth.

3. It gives ſo great offence to many weak ones, that it cauſes them to with-draw themſelves from the ſociety of the faithfull, to abhorre the Sacrifices of the Lord, to deſpiſe the ſtanding Ordinances of the Church, and for thoſe evills, which we ſee, to forſake that which is good, to throw up all, and to make ſeparation.

4. Hereby they deſtroy their own ſouls, of which others fearing God, are more ſenſible then they themſelves: Chriſt beholding *Jeruſalem*, and fore-ſeeing the calamity that hung over it, *Wept for it*, they did not ſo for themſelves.

5. They provoke wrath, and draw down judgements upon the place where they live, both upon themſelves and others for their ſakes: *For theſe things ſakes comes the wrath of God upon the Children of diſobedience*, Epheſ. 5. 6.

Upon theſe Conſiderations, pious ſouls, men fearing God, are ſenſible of the ſins of others, as well as of their own; and of the iniquity of the times and places where they live, and they are un-

to

to them matter of great ſorrow and greif of heart: *I beheld the tranſgreſſors, and was greived*, Pſal. 119. 158.

Uſes.

1. It ſhould teach men wiſedom, where they can, and as farr as they can, to uſe prudence in the choyce of the places of their habitation, and when to make this one of their reſpects among all other, that they may ſeat themſelves in ſuch a place where the fear of God is amongſt them. *Lot* made but an ill choyce (though he lighted on the beſt of the Land) when he choſe the plain of *Sodom* to pitch his Tent in: *Abraham* might well be afraid to ſojourne in *Gerar*, when he perceived *the feare of God was not in that place*, Gen. 20. 11. When we match our Sons, or Daughters, we enquire diligently, what Portion, what Parentage, we enquire after the fatneſs of the Land, fruitfulneſs of the Soyle, convenience of ſituation, and the like, and all this with good diſcretion too; but among all the reſt, we ſhould not leave out this as a maine conſideration, whether we diſpoſe of them to ſuch a place where the fear of God is among the people, the Inhabitants there, whether they live under a good Miniſtery, a good Majeſtracy, a good Government, where wickedneſs and vice is puniſhed, were Religion and godlineſs is ſet up,

countenane't, and encouraged, whether the feare of God be in the place? a very conſiderable bleſſing, and a great part of their happineſs.

2. Try your zeale and love to God and his truth to holy Religion, and the Goſpel by this Touchſtone, by your hatred of ſin, as well in others, as in your ſelves, and by your grief and ſorrow of heart, when you ſee it reign and abound in the Land, and in the times and places where you live. Beloved, we live in evill times, and in places bad enough, where you have occaſion enough given you to exerciſe your zeale, and to ſhew your love, and grief, and anger, if you have any in this caſe, you may ſee as our Prophet did, the Law forſaken, the Covenant broken, the Worſhip of God neglected, the Ordinances deſpiſed, the Sabbath prophan'd, the Sacraments ſlighted, &c. if we can ſee theſe things, and not be ſenſible of them, and ſorry for them, at leaſt where we cannot help them, ſurely our zeale is cold, and our love but ſmall; *Set a Marke* (ſaith the Lord) *upon the Foreheads of all thoſe that Mourne for the abominations that are done in the City*, Ezek. 9. 4. 'Tis an Argument of a gracious heart, to take to heart the iniquities of the times, to ſigh and mourn for them, to be diſpleaſed with them, and troubled at them.

3. Here's an object and opportunity for such as are in place and power, to exercise their authority in suppressing sin, in punishing the wickedness of the times and places where they live, in stopping the course and current of iniquity prevailing: If Magistrates, they must be cloathed with zeale as with a cloak, they must put on Justice as a Robe, and Judgement as a Crown or Diadem, they must be girt about with the Sword of vengeance, and let proud and insolent offenders know, they doe not beare that Sword in vain: If Ministers, they must cry aloud, and not spare, and never leave crying out against the prevailing and reigning sins of the times and places where they live, till they have cryed them down, and take heed they doe not by their silence and connivence, make themselves partakers of other mens sins: Parents of Children, Masters of families, they are in those lesser *societies* which they are set to Govern; both Kings, Priests, and Prophets, all which Offices they must execute in the Government of their little Commonwealth, every one in the severall Sphere wherein he moves, and Calling wherein he is set, according to his place and power is to endeavour the suppressing of sin, the punishment of wickedness, and the maintenance and encouragement of true Religion and vertue.

4. Here's

4. Here's occaſion and opportunity (in ſuch evill times as here we ſpeak of) for the Saints and ſervants of the moſt high, the favourites of Heaven, to ſtand up, and to ſhew themſelves, to make interceſſion for the People, and Places where they are, for the diverting of thoſe Judgements which theſe ſins call for, to uſe the Intereſt which they have in God, to intreat for the reſt, that God would ſpare them, to ſtand in the Gap (as *Moſes* did) to make Atonement for the People and Places where they are, as *Aaron* did, to divert, ſtay, ſuſpend, or remove Judgement denounc't againſt them, when wrath is gone forth, and the Plague begun; and happy thoſe Places which have ſuch as theſe are in them, though but a few favourites of Heaven, to make in to God, to uſe their intereſt in him, to intreat for the reſt, great things hath God done at their requeſt in the behalfe of others, and even thoſe that deſpiſe them, are more beholden to them then they are aware of.

5. In ſuch evill times and places as we ſpeak of, we are to be admoniſhed to walk warily for fear of Infection, for fear of ſeduction, leaſt we come to be corrupted and infected by them, and ſo while we complain the times are evill, we our ſelves make them worſe; ſo St. *Paul* argues, *Ephe.*

5. 15. *Walk circumſpectly, becauſe the dayes are evil*; By no means to have any *fellowſhip with the unfruitfull works of darkneſs, but rather reprove them*, (*Epheſ.* 5. 11.) to ſhew our diſlike of them by avoyding them, to reprove them by a ſober, righteous, and godly converſation, the moſt reall reproofe to the lewd and looſe carriage and behaviour of wicked men that can be; by this oppoſition, the holy converſation of godly men becomes more illuſtrious; thus doth their light come to *ſhine before Men*, ſo that *they ſeeing their good works*, are moved to glorifie the *Father which is in Heaven*; this is to walk as Children of the light, and to ſhine as lights in the midſt of a froward, and a dark Generation, which will be the great conviction and condemnation of thoſe wicked men they live amongſt, and their own high prayſe and great reward another day: This was the high prayſe of *Noah*, *Gen.* 6. 9. Noah *was a juſt Man in his Generation*: Why, what Generation was that? it was an evill Generation; *When all Fleſh had corrupted their wayes before the Lord*, Noah *ſtill kept his integrity, he was a juſt Man in his Generation.* For *Abraham* in *Caldea*, *Lot* in *Sodom*, *Job* in *Uz*, *Noah* in his Generation to hold faſt his integrity, was their high prayſe.

And

And ſo we have done with *Elijah's* firſt *Satis eſt*, the firſt of his *enoughs*, *In reſpect of the evill he had ſeen.*

We come now to conſider of the ſecond, which *reſpects the evill that he had Suffered*, *Satis Tuli*, *I have* ſuffered *enough*; and this ariſeth out of thoſe words in the latter end of the 14. *ver. They have Slain thy Prophets with the edge of the Sword, and I onely am left, and they ſeek my Life to take it away*: By this, you may gather in what condition he was in reſpect of ſufferings, by Perſecution, Baniſhment, Hunger, and Thirſt, and variety of dangers, threatning even Death it ſelf.

The inference from hence is this;

That it is no news to ſee the beſt of Saints to ſuffer the worſt things that the world can doe unto them: To ſee *Joſeph* in the Priſon, *Job* upon the Dunghill, *Jeremy* in the Dungeon, *Jonah* in the Whales belly, *Iſay* under the Saw, *Paul* under the Axe, *Stephen* under a ſtorme of Stones, and all this under the hands of wicked men; and more then this, when ſuch wicked and ungodly men live at eaſe, and in peace, proſper, and flouriſh, *Come in no misfortune like other men*; *neither are they plagued like other men*, as the Prophet *David* obſerves, *Pſal.* 73. 5. Theſe things may ſeem ſtrange

to

to humane apprehenſion, and doe ; but they are no news to thoſe that are well read in the wayes of Providence, nor ſtrange neither, when wiſely weighed, and rightly conſidered : And to help you in thoſe Conſiderations, I commend you to two of *Davids* Pſalmes, the 37. and the 73. both ſpent wholly upon this ſubject, to take away the ſcandall of the Croſſe ; In both which, he firſt rayſes the Objections, and then brings in full anſwers to them for the clearing of Gods Juſtice in this croſs diſpenſation of Providence, and for the ſatisfying of himſelf and others in this matter: I ſhall therefore wave what the Prophet hath there delivered, and onely ſhew you very briefly ſome Reaſons why and how it comes ſo to paſſe, and what profitable Uſe we may make of this Meditation, and ſo paſſe on to the next.

Reaſons.

If you aske me then, How it comes to paſs that the beſt men ſhould ſuffer the worſt things here in this world ? I Anſwer :

1. This proceeds from the malice of *Satan*, ever contriving miſchief againſt the Church, even to the utter ruine of it, if it were poſſible, that the gates of Hell ſhould prevail againſt it ; There is

an

an enmity between the Woman and the Serpent, which will never be reconciled.

2. From the hatred that wicked men (well nigh as bad as himselfe) bear against it; his very Instruments and Agents are ready to execute his will upon it; the enmity is not onely between the Woman and the Serpent, but between their Seed also: Wicked men are the very Seed of the Serpent, and doe as naturally maligne and hate the Church, and Children of God, as the Serpent doth a man.

3. From their own folly, which by sinne lay themselves open to their malice: *Balaam* knew he could have no power over the *Israelites* to hurt them, except he could devise some way how to draw them to sin against God. But when he had contriv'd a way to make them commit *Fornication with the Daughters of* Moab, he knew he had his purpose on them in exposing them to wrath and judgement, *Numb.* 25.

4. This comes to pass by the just and wise Providence of God, not onely permitting, but ordering it so, for holy ends, and good purposes.

1. For tryall of their Faith, that they may come out of them as Gold refined.

2. For exercise of their Graces, *Ut probentur, appro-*

approbentur, improbentur; that they may be proved, approved, improved.

3. For purging out and mortifying of their corruptions, crucifying of their luſts, and inordinate affections.

4. For holding of them cloſe to Duty, as of Repentance, Prayer, and a conſtant dependance upon God.

5. For the weyning of them from this preſent evill world, that they might ſeek and affect better things in a better world, *and minde the things that are above*, Coloſ. 3. 1.

6. That they may have nothing to ſuffer hereafter, they are chaſtiſed in the world, that they may not be condemned with the world.

Uſes.

1. Are theſe the ends why God ſuffereth his Saints to ſuffer? Then wellcome ſufferings by the grace of God; Wellcome Afflictions by the will of God, they ſhall be a benefit unto us, a greater advantage then the Eaſe, Peace, and Proſperity of wicked men can be unto them; nay, then theſe could have been unto our ſelves, if we had had them: *Eaſe ſlayeth the fooliſh, and the proſperity of Fooles deſtroyeth them*, Prov. 1. 32. Standing Pooles gather mud and dirt, when running

ning Streames keep pure and clear; Winde and Thunder purge the Ayre, and the Fire doth not conſume, but refine the Gold that is caſt into it: and ſuch are the ſufferings of the Saints & ſervants of God to thoſe that are exerciſed under them.

2. Think not ſtrange of thoſe fiery tryalls, and that the beſt men are ſo often under them, it were ſtrange if it were not ſo; *Chriſtianus Crucianus*, the Croſſe is the Chriſtians badge, the Cogniſance of a Diſciple, our Lord himſelf the Captain of our ſalvation, was made perfect through ſufferings, he carried the Croſs upon his own ſhoulders up Mount *Calvary*, upon which himſelf was Crucified; and we may not think much that come after him, with *Symon* the *Cyrenian* to carry one end of it: Shew me the man of any ſtanding in the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, that hath been conſtantly free from ſufferings, and I will ſay, *He is either a Miracle, or a Monſter in Religion.*

3. Think not the worſe neither of your ſelves, nor others in this caſe; Croſſes are not Curſes, nor the greateſt Sufferers (therefore) the greateſt Sinners: The ſufferings of the Saints are ſo farr from being Arguments of Gods diſpleaſure towards them, that clean contrary, they are rather evidences of his love and favour: So St. *Paul* Ar-

gues, *Heb.* 12. 6. *Whom he loveth he chasteneth, and correcteth every sonne whom he receiveth.* St. *Jerom* never feared his estate worse, then when for three years together he lived in peace, and was free from all trouble and adversity. If thou faint in the time of adversity, thy strength is small: Remember, all promises of blessings and good things made to Gods Children, are made with exception of the Cross, against which, even grace and goodness, piety and obedience, holiness it self is no protection: Sanctity and suffering may stand together. They were holy ones of whom God spake, *Ps.* 89. 32. 33. *Their iniquity will I visit with the rod, and their sins with scourges: but my loving kindness will I never take from them, nor suffer my truth to faile.*

4. Beware of murmuring, by no means suffer your hearts to break out in any evill thoughts against God and his Providence, even in his most severe proceedings against you, as if he dealt too hardly with you, this were to charge God foolishly; *But let him be ever justified in his sayings* and doings, *and clear when he is judged*; and to silence all clamour, murmurings, and mutinous thoughts. In this case take with you these two considerations. First, See sin in all, let the means

by

by which you ſuffer be what it will, and the Inſtruments of it what they can, doe but look well into it, and you ſhall finde, *Sinne* lyes at the bottome: *David* ſaw this, *Pſal.* 25. 18. *Look upon my adverſity and my trouble, and forgive me all my Sinne.* *Jeremy* ſaw it in his *Lamentations, cap.* 3. 39. *Why doth living man complaine, man ſuffering for his Sinnes?* as if he ſhould ſay, *There is no reaſon for it, let him conſider well of it, and he ſhall find, his Sinnes are greater then his ſufferings, his ſufferings leſs then his deſervings.* Secondly, See God in all, though ſin be the cauſe of all, 'tis God that is the Judge of all: *Is there any evill in the City, and the Lord hath not done it?* And if it be the Lord, let him doe what he will, he neither can, nor will doe unjuſtly? When *Moſes* told *Aaron* in a grievous Affliction that befell him, *Levit.* 10. *That it was from the Lord*; The Text ſayes, *Aaron held his peace, ver.* 3. he had no more to ſay, *If it be the Lords doing, let him doe what is good in his eyes; his will be done as well upon us, as by us, and as well in taking away, as giving:* Ever ſay with holy *Job* in the like caſe, *Bleſſed be the Name of the Lord*, Job 1. 22.

5. In the ſufferings of the Saints and ſervants of God here in this world, let wicked and ungodly men reade their own doome, and certainly con-

clude, That they have a heavy reckoning to make to God in the day of account, that great is the wrath of the Allmighty againſt them, and fearefull the Judgements that doe await them. *Behold* (ſaith the Lord) *I viſit the City upon which my name is called, and doe you think to eſcape? you ſhall not eſcape. And if the righteous be ſcarely ſaved, where ſhall the ungodly and the Sinner appeare?* Surely if he doe ſo ſeverely ſcourge his own Children with Scourges, he will torment them with Scorpions. *Solomon* obſerved in his time, *Eccleſ.* 8. 11. That *becauſe Judgement was not ſpeedily executed upon evill doers; therefore the hearts of the ſonnes of men were wholly ſet upon wickedneſs.* But there is no reaſon for it, if they knew all; alas! they ſee not that their day is comming, they may make a Covenant with the Grave, and with Hell be at agreement, but that Covenant will not ſtand; they may cry, *Peace, peace unto themſelves, where there is no peace,* and ſo ſleep a while in their ſecurity, but their damnation ſleepeth not; they may ſing Requiems to their ſouls, *Ede, bibe, lude,* Eat, drink, and be merry, but they ſee not the hand-writing on the Wall, *Mene, Mene, &c. Thou art weighed in the ballance, and art found too light:* they heare not the dreadfull noyſe, *Stulte hâc nocte,* This night ſhall they

fetch

fetch away thy ſoule. With what deriſion doth the wiſedom of God ſpeak to ſuch, *Eccleſ.* 11. 9. *Rejoyce, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheere thee in the dayes of thy youth, and walk in the ſight of thine eyes, and the wayes of thine heart; but remember, that for all theſe things God will bring thee into judgement.* But the Lord ſpeaks terror to them by his royall Prophet *David*, *Pſal.* 50 21. *Thus and thus haſt thou done, and I held my tongue, and thou thoughteſt me ſuch a one as thy ſelfe: but I will reprove thee, and ſet thy ſinnes in order before thee.* Beloved, take this for a moſt certaine obſervation, 'Tis the moſt dangerous ſtate in the world for a man to goe on in ſinne, and proſper, to live in ſinne, and to live at eaſe, free from adverſity and affliction: *Ephraim is given unto Idols: let him alone*, ſaith the Lord by the Prophet *Hoſea*, *c.* 4. 17. *Nolo iſtam miſericordiam*, (ſaith St. *Jerom*) *Lord let me have none of that mercy, to be let alone in my ſinne: Scinde, ure, ſeca ut in æternum parcas:* Let me ſuffer any thing in this life that thou ſhalt pleaſe to lay upon me, that I may be ſpared in the life to come, and have nothing to ſuffer in the other world. Let all ſecure ſinners know, There is a Pit digging up for them, a very ſignificant expreſſion of the Prophet, *Pſal.* 94. 13. *Untill the*

pit

Pit be digged for the ungodly: Now the longer the Pit is in digging, the deeper it will be; and the deeper it is, the greater will be the fall into it, and the more impoſſible the recovery out of it, and ſo deep it may be, that it may let the ſinner down into Hell it ſelf. I conclude this Point with that Advertiſement of Saint *Paul* which he gives to all ſuch ſecure ſinners, *Rom.* 2. 4. *Know ye not that the patience and long ſuffering of God ſhould leade to Repentance? But thou out of thine hardneſs, and heart that cannot repent, treaſureſt up unto thy ſelfe wrath againſt the day of wrath, and the declaration of the righteous judgement of God.* And what a miſerable thing is this, for a man to treaſure up unto himſelf wrath againſt the day of wrath, and all his dayes to be carrying fuell to that fire in which himſelfe is eternally to burne?

Laſtly, From this truth, let all men certainly conclude a Judge to come; for he that is the Judge of all the world hath ſaid it, *That he will render to every man according to his works*, Rom. 2. 6. But we ſee, that is not done in this life; in this life here are croſs diſpenſations of Providence, by which it falls out oft times clean contrary. *Solomon* obſerved this in his time, *Eccleſ.* 8. 14. *That there be righteous Men to whom it cometh*

ac-

according to the working of the wicked: and there be wicked Men to whom it cometh according to the work of the righteous. The royall Prophet *David* before him obſerved the ſame, *Pſal.* 73. and complineth of it, *That the wicked flouriſh, when the righteous periſh; they live at eaſe, and have all things that their hearts can wiſh:* When the righteous are under the Croſs, and under the Rod, chaſtiſed every Morning, and viſited every moment, *Hic pietatis honos?* Is this the reward of piety? Is this to render to every man according to his works? ſurely no, and if things ſhould reſt thus, then well might Saint *Paul* complain, *That of all men, the Saints and ſervants of God were moſt miſerable: If in this life onely we have hope, then are we of all men moſt miſerable:* But ſay not ſo, and think not ſo, but poſſeſſe your ſouls with patience for a time, and mark the end, and you ſhall finde, it is not ſo. Remember that of St. *Paul*, *Acts* 17. 31. *That God hath appointed a day wherein to Judge the world in righteouſneſs, by his Sonne Jeſus Chriſt*, when he will make all theſe croſſe reckonings right and ſtreight, wherein he will render tribulation to them that have troubled his, and to thoſe that have been troubled, reſt with him; when he will ſay to all thoſe ſecure and ſenſuall ſinners, (as to the rich Epicure in the Goſpel,)

Gospel,) *Sonnes, remember you in your life time received pleasure, and these my servants received pain: now they are comforted, and you are tormented:* that's the day wherein this word shall be made good, *That he will render to every Man according to his works*, therefore called, *The day of refreshing*, Acts 3. 19. *The day of restauration: The day of the righteous judgement of God*, Rom. 2. 5. Gods Judgements are alwayes righteous, but they are not alwayes declared to be so: but then they shall be declared to be so, in the sight of all the world, men, and Angels, and they shall all confesse and say, as in the Psalme, *Verely there is a reward for the righteous: doubtless there is a God that judgeth the earth.*

And so we have done with the Prophets second, *Satis est*, the second of his *enoughs* spoken in reference to what he had suffered, *Satis Tuli, I have suffered enough.* We now pass to the third, spoken in reference to what he *had done.*

3. *Satis Feci, I have done enough:* And this ariseth out of the first words of the 14. *verse, I have been very jealous, or zealous, for the Lord God of Hosts:* this word is very significant and comprehensive, it containes in it much; as the faithfull discharge of his duty in the Office of a

Prophet

Prophet whereunto he was called, his care to maintaine the true Religion and Worſhip of God, his courage in reproving the ſinnes of the ten Tribes, even in the greateſt, *Ahab* himſelfe not excepted; his zeale in convincing and ſilencing the Prieſts of *Baall* in thoſe perillous times, when they had the protection and countenance of Authority on their ſides, and much more; and that he did not theſe things coldly, negligently, perfunctorily; but with all earneſtneſs and fervency, (as the word imports) for it comes from ζεῶ, to hiſſe, as Iron doth, when being red hot it is dipt in Water, ſuch was his activity in the performance of theſe his duties, and fervency of affection: *Quicquid egit, valide egit*, as the *Italians* are ſaid to doe, *The zeale of Gods Houſe did even conſume him*, as another Prophet ſpeaks: he did theſe duties with zeale as hot as fire: neither in this teſtimony did he arrogate to himſelfe any thing at all more then due, nor commend himſelfe above his meaſure, the Story of his Life and Actions evidently declares the truth of what he here aſſerts, *That he had been very zealous for the Lord God of Hoſts, in doing his Will, in ſeeking his Glory, and in upholding and maintaining his true Worſhip againſt all oppoſers, &c.*

The Inferences from hence are theſe three.

The firſt, Thoſe that are for God, muſt doe the will of God.

The ſecond, It is not enough to doe, *Opere operato*; but they muſt doe it as they ſhould be done, in due manner, with due affections, and they muſt doe it home, or els it will never reach to *Elijah's Satis eſt, It is enough.*

The third, It ſhall be their greateſt comfort in the evill day, that they have done ſo: the illation of theſe is cleare out of *Elijah's Satis eſt* in the Text, compar'd with the firſt words of the 14. *v.*

Firſt, Thoſe that are for God, muſt doe the will of God in that Place, Calling, and Condition of Life wherein God hath ſet them: They muſt doe his will, whether it be Prophet, or Apoſtle, or a common Chriſtian, Magiſtrate, or Miniſter, or common Beleever, every one muſt in his Place, doe the will of God: It is our dayly Prayer, *That his will may be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven:* And in this Prayer, Is it fit that we ſhould over-look our ſelves? No, as it is our dayly Prayer, ſo it ſhould be our dayly practiſe to doe his will: *Not every one that ſaith unto me,* Lord, Lord, *ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven. Not the hearers, but*

the

the doers of the Law ſhall be juſtified: If you know theſe things, bleſſed are you if you doe them. Chriſtianity calls for Action; it is not Logicall, but Morall; not ſpeculative, but practique: it conſiſts not in ſaying, nor in knowing, nor in profeſſing, but in working; there muſt be a *Feci* in it: *Regnum Dei non datur otioſis*, (as St. *Bernard* ſpeaks) the Kingdom of God is not given to idle profeſſors, and pretenders; the Calling of a Chriſtian is a laborious Calling, a Building, a Husbandry, a Warfare, all theſe call to work, there is ſomthing to be done whereby we may bring glory to God, good to men, and comfort to our own ſouls: The very Heathen were ſenſible of this, That they were bound to doe ſome good in the Generation wherein they lived; and they that did not ſo, they were reproach't, as *Inutile pondus terræ*, an unprofitable burden to the Earth. *Fruges conſumere nati*: as if they were borne onely to devoure the good things of the Earth. He was an honeſt Moraliſt that ſpake it, *Mortem non timore, quia ita vixi, ut fruſtra me natum non exiſtimem*; I am not afraid to dye, becauſe I have ſo lived, as that no man may think that I was born in vaine: a teſtimony that may ſhame many Chriſtians that ſo live and dye as if they were born in vain, im-

profitable burdens to the Earth: Terrible is the doome of the unprofitable ſervant in the Goſpel, *Take the unprofitable ſervant, binde him hand and foot, and caſt him into utter darkneſs:* He doth not charge him as being an hurtfull ſervant, but as an unprofitable ſervant; not with waſting his *Talent*, but with not improving it. Beloved, God looks we ſhould be profitable ſervants, that we ſhould bring glory to his name, honour to the Goſpel, and that we ſhould doe good in our Generation, that the world ſhould be the better for our comming into it, not the worſe: Can any man imagine, or can it ſtand with reaſon to think, That the moſt holy God, and wiſe Creator of all things, ſhould Create ſuch a Creature as Man is for nought, and not look for ſervice from him, and glory out of him? Why there is no Creature that he hath made, though never ſo mean and deſpicable, but he looks for glory by it, and ſervice out of it, in it's kind; *Natura nihil facit fruſtra*, The God of Nature hath made nothing in vain: And ſhall Man, the moſt excellent piece of the Creation (next unto the Angels) be unſerviceable, and bring in nothing to the glory of the Creator? Man, endued with ſuch rare gifts and abilities to doe good withall, both to himſelf and others;

Did

Did the Creator endue him with ſuch rare excellencies above the reſt of the Creatures, ſuch as Underſtanding, Will, Memory, Affections, Reaſon, Judgement, Knowledge, Conſcience, for nought? No ſurely, To whom much is given, of him much will be required: great receipts will make men liable to great accounts: A time will come when they ſhall give an account both of their Time, and of their Talents, how they have uſed and improved them, what good they have done with them. Beloved, That man ſhall never dye comfortably, which hath not in his life time, in ſome ſort, anſwered the end of his Creation; The end of his Creation is, to glorifie God, to doe good to men in his Generation, and to further the ſalvation of his own ſoule: *Bleſſed is that ſervant whom when his Maſter cometh, he ſhall finde ſo doing.*

Uſes.

1. It reproves all carnall, careleſs, and ſecure Chriſtians, if I may call them ſuch, and not rather Epicure, or Atheiſt, that make no Conſcience at all of doing good; ſure they think ſalvation will come of courſe, and God will drop down happineſs into their laps, while they ſit ſtill, and never look after it: What ſhall we eat, or what ſhall we drink, or wherewithall ſhall we be cloathed, are

the

the things that take up their care and thoughts; but the *Unum necessarium*, that one thing that is necessary, wholly layd aside: Surely a great part of the world are very Atheists, they either think there's no heaven at all, or they are much mistaken in the way to it, and the means of attaining it; We must work, walk, runne, fight the good fight of Faith; Strive to enter in at the streight gate: through many tribulations, many sufferings, many cumbatings; there are corruptions to be mortified, Lusts to be crucified, Temptations to be resisted, afflictions to be suffered, spirituall wickednesses to be wrastled withall: *Qui cupit optatam cursu contingere metam, multa tulit fuitq; pius sudavit & alsit*: Christianity is no idle Calling, it will take up the whole man, and the whole time, it will keep us doing in the practise of all Christian duties, and the exercise of all Christian graces.

2. This reproves the *Scepticks* and *Gnosticks* of these times, whose Religion lyes all in their Braine, and in their Tongue, the Practique part of Christianity they lay by, and place it all in Theory and speculation, they have found out a neerer way to Heaven then ever our Fathers knew, an easier, and a cheaper, they can talk themselves thither, and dispute themselves thither, and all

this

this while ſit ſtill, and neither work, nor walk for it at all; the good works which Chriſtianity calls for, they pay with good words; their devotion is turn'd into diſputing, their faith into faction, and their charity into contention; the mayne of Religion they place in hearing of Sermons. *Pliny* writes of a certain Serpent, *Aure concepit, Ore parit*, That it conceives in the Eare, and brings forth at the Mouth: as fit an Embleme for ſuch profeſſors as can be; They conceive by the Eare, in an inſatiable deſire of Hearing; and bring forth at the Mouth, by endleſs diſputing, and diſcourſing. But as to the Hand by working, or the Foot by walking, their Religion reacheth not, without which, all the reſt is but vain, as St. *James* tells us. Therefore, *Set me as a Seale upon thine heart, and as a Bracelet upon thine Arme*, ſaith the Church to Chriſt, *Cant.* 8. 6. Upon which, St. *Bernard* thus Gloſſeth, *In corde ſunt cogitationes, in brachiis ſunt operationes, ergo ſuper cor, & ſuper brachium*: The heart is the ſeat of affections, the Arme the Inſtrument of actions: Set me therefore as a Seale upon thy heart, and as a bracelet upon thine arme, that with the one I may ever affect, and with the other effect the things that pleaſe thee. Beloved, Not onely the Law, but the Goſpel, every where calls

calls for good works at our hands: *Be zealous of good works*, Titus 2. 14. *Fruitfull in good works*, Col. 1. 10. *And let ours alſo learn to ſhew forth good works*: What? though they be not *Cauſa Regnandi*, The cauſe why we ſhall reigne; yet they are, *Via Regni*, The way to the Kingdome, and the way which God hath appointed we ſhould walk in thither: What though they doe not juſtifie, nor merit? yet they are profitable for neceſſary uſes: By them is our Heavenly Father glorified, the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt honoured and adored; they are evidences of the ſoundneſs of our Faith, the ſincerity of our profeſſion; they bring comfort to the Conſcience here, and there is a certain reward for them in Heaven; though not, *Propter opera*; yet *Secundum opera*, according to our works to be given unto us. *Bleſſed are the dead which dye in the Lord, even ſo ſaith the Spirit, for they reſt from their labours, and their works follow them*: And happy is he which hath ſtore of them in that day to praiſe him in the gates.

And thus much of the firſt inference, drawn from *Elijah's* third *Satis eſt*, that is, *I have done enough*: Thoſe that are for God, muſt doe the will of God.

2. The ſecond follows, and 'tis this, That it is

not

not enough to doe the will of God, *Opere operato*: but they muſt doe it as it ſhould be done, or els it will never reach to the *Satis eſt* in the Text: Now this *Satis eſt*, hath reſpect to two things in doing the will of God. Firſt, The manner of doing it. Secondly, The extent of it. The firſt requires, that it be done well. The ſecond, that it be done home, they both are included in the Word *Zealous: I have been Zealous for the Lord God of Hoſts.* Zeale is a vehement affection, compoſed of Love and Anger, and Actions flowing from theſe two, are ever done in earneſt, they are done home and throughly, and ſo ought we to doe all things that we doe for God: The *Opus operatum*, the work done will not ſerve the turne, but it muſt be rightly qualified in all the circumſtances of it, and done in a right manner: If we love the Lord our God, we muſt love him with all our heart, with all our ſoule, with all our mind, and with all our ſtrength: If we ſerve him, we muſt ſerve him with reverence and godly feare: If we worſhip him, we muſt worſhip him in *Spirit*, and in *Truth*. *Luther* ſaid well, *That God loves Advers, rather then Verbs*, the manner of doing, more then the work done, the will more then the deed, the mind more then the matter, we muſt not ſerve

God negligently, nor we muſt not ſerve him by halves, either of theſe make our obedience fall ſhort of *Elijah's Satis eſt* in the Text: To ſay, we beleeve in God, we love God, and we feare God, and not to obey him, to ſhew our faith by our works, and our fear by our worſhip, *Non ſatis eſt*, it is not enough; but to our faith to joyne our obedience, and to our fear to joyne our worſhip, and to our love our care to keep his Commandements, *Satis eſt*, it is enough: To profeſs that we know God, to confeſs his Name, to draw neer unto him with our lips, and in all outward deportment to have a forme of godlineſs, *Non ſatis eſt*, it is not enough; but to know God in Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelfe, to draw neer unto him with our hearts, and deareſt affections, and with the forme of godlineſs to ſhew forth the power of it, *Satis eſt*, it is enough: To cry *Lord, Lord*, as in the Goſpel, and *Templum Domini, Templum Domini, The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord*, as the *Jews* did in *Jeremy*, *Non ſatis eſt*, it is not enough: but to doe the will of our Father which is in Heaven, and in his Temple to ſpeak of his Honour, and to worſhip him aright, *Satis eſt*, it is enough. To make our boaſt of God, and of his Law, to heare every day a Sermon, to know

know the Miſtery of the Goſpel, to have a mouth full of Scripture ready at all times to throw at an adverſary in diſpute or diſcourſe, *Non ſatis eſt*, it is not enough: but to know the truth as it is in *Jeſus*, to receive the truth with the love of the truth, to anſwer the end of the Evangelicall Law, which is Love out of a pure heart a good Conſcience, and Faith unfeigned, *Satis eſt*, it is enough. To bring multitudes of ſacrifices and oblations unto the Lord, to ſtretch out our hands before him, and to make many Prayers, *Non ſatis eſt*, it is not enough: but to waſh us, to make us cleane, to take away the evill of our works from before his eyes, to ceaſe to doe evill, and learne to doe well, *Satis eſt*, it is enough. To come before the Lord *with thouſands of Rams, and ten thouſand Rivers of Oyle, to give the fruit of my body for the ſin of my ſoule*, (Micha 6. 6. 7.) *Non ſatis eſt*, it is not enough: but *to doe Judgement, to love Mercy, and to walk humbly before the Lord*, *Satis eſt*, it is enough. To conclude this point, to be admitted into the viſible Church, to be matriculated into it by Baptiſme, to live in a profeſſed ſubjection to the Goſpel of Chriſt, to come to Church, to heare Sermons, to ſit out the Service, and at the appointed times to receive the Sacra-

ment of the Lords Supper, (though this be more then we can gaine of many among you,) *Non ſatis eſt*, it is not enough: but to make it our care all the dayes of our life, to make good the Covenant which we made in our Baptiſme, to become Members of the inviſible Church, incorporated into it, and united unto it by the bonds of faith and of the ſpirit, to expreſs the power of the Word, Sacraments, and Spirit working by them in a conſtant holy walking before the Lord, as becomes the Members of that holy Society, *Satis eſt*, it is enough: And ſo we have made good the ſecond Inference drawn out of *Elijah's* third *Satis eſt*, in reference to what he had done, *Satis Feci, I have done enough.* But ſtay a little, before we take our leave of this *Satis eſt*, it is neceſſary we ſhould anſwer an Objection that lyes in our way, and muſt be removed before we can proceed any further.

Obj. Quid audio? What is that I heare? *Satis feci, I have done enough:* Who can ſay ſo? be he a Prophet, be he an Apoſtle, an Evangeliſt, be he the holieſt of Saints that ever lived, can he ſay of himſelfe, *Satis feci, I have done enough?* Is there a *Satis* in our obedience unto which we may arrive, and then ſay, *It is enough?* Our Saviour

tells

tells us, *That when we have done all that we can, we are unprofitable ſervants:* How then can any ſay, *It is enough?* or *I have done enough?*

Sol. To this I anſwer by a double diſtinction.

Firſt thus, There is a *Satis ad Juſtificationem*; and there is a *Satis ad Teſtificationem:* there is a *Satis* as to Juſtification; and there is a *Satis* as to Teſtification. As to the former, there is no man can ſay, *He hath done enough. Enter not into judgement with thy ſervant, O Lord, for in thy ſight ſhall no man living be juſtified.* Pſal. 143. 2.

But as to the later, there is a *Satis ad teſtificationem*, to teſtification, that is, To teſtifie the truth of our faith, the ſincerity of our obedience, and the uprightneſs of our hearts in the Service of God. When *Abraham* was ſo ready, upon Gods command, to offer up his Sonne *Iſaac* in ſacrifice to him, *as to bring him to Mount* Moriah, *there to build an Altar, to lay the Wood in order upon it, and binde his Sonne to the Wood, to take the Knife in his hand, and to ſtretch forth his hand to Slay him:* God ſtaies his hand, *bids him hold his hand, proceed no further*, Satis eſt, *It is enough, for now I know that thou loveſt me, ſeeing thou haſt not refuſed to offer up thine onely Sonne in ſacrifice to me at my command*, Gen. 22. Here's a *Satis ad teſtificationem*,

enough

enough to teſtifie his love and obedience; and ſo, though none of Gods Saints and ſervants can reach to a *Satis* in reference to juſtification; yet as to the teſtification of the ſoundneſs of their faith, the ſincerity of their obedience, and the uprightneſs of their hearts in his Service, there is a *Satis* which they may reach to, and of which God himſelfe will teſtifie, and ſay, *Satis eſt*, *It is enough.*

The ſecond diſtinction in Anſwer to this Objection, is this: There is another two-fold *Satis*:

{First, *Satis ad perfectionem.*
{Secondly, *Satis ad acceptationem.*

First *enough*, *In reference to perfection.* And, Secondly *enough*, *In reference to acceptation.*

As to the former, *Nunquam ſatis eſt*, we can never arrive enough as to perfection; Our Saviour hath ſet us a Coppy, that we can never come neer, *Mat* 6. *Be you perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.* Alas! our higheſt perfection, is to acknowledge our imperfection: and the beſt of us all, when we have done our beſt, to acknowledge, *We are unprofitable ſervants:* To confeſs, with the *Centurion*, *Domine non ſum dignus*, *O Lord I am not worthy the leaſt of thy mercies:* and with the *Publi-*

can,

can, to pray, *Lord be mercifull to me a ſinner*: ſo that if we look at perfection, *Nunquam ſatis eſt*, we ſhall never arrive to that degree, or height of obedience, as to ſay, *Nunc ſatis eſt*, *It is now enough*. But if we look at acceptation, bleſſed be God, there is a *Satis*, whereunto the Saints and ſervants of Almighty God may, and doe arrive, even in this life, through the mercy of God, and the indulgence of our Heavenly Father, which, where he ſees a willing mind, accepts of the will for the deed, and of what we can doe, inſtead of what we ſhould doe, which accepts according that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not: And ſo this rubb being removed, we paſs to the third Inference, which is this:

That thus to have ſo done, the will of God will be our greateſt comfort in an evill day, when we ſhall ſtand in moſt need of it. *Hezekiah* found it ſo, when the Meſſage came to him by the Prophet *Iſay* from the Lord, *That he ſhould ſet his houſe in order, for he muſt dye. O Lord remember, I have walked before thee with an upright and a perfect heart, and have done that which was good in thy ſight*, Iſay 38. 1, 3. *Nehemiah* found it ſo, who having done worthily for the people of God in obteining Commiſſion from the King of *Perſia* for

the

the redeeming of the *Jews* out of the *Babylonish* Captivity, and building the Walls of *Jeruſalem*, often comforts himſelfe with the remembrance of it, *Nehemiah* 13. 14. *Remember me, O my God in this, and blot not out the kindneſs that I have ſhewed to thy houſe.* And *verſe* the 22. *Remember me, O my God, concerning this alſo, and pardon me according to thy great mercy.* And again *verſe* 31. *Remember me, O my God, in goodneſs* Indeed he needed not have put God in mind to remember him, the Lord would have remembred him, and his kindneſs ſhewed to his people, though he ſhould forget it: God is not unfaithfull that he ſhould forget the labour and love ſhewed unto his Saints. We ſee in *Matthew* 25. how he did remember it, when they had forgotten it that ſhewed it, *ver.* 42. 43. *When I was hungry, you gave me to eate: when I was thirſty, you gave me to drink: when I was naked, you cloathed me: ſick, and in priſon, you viſited me, and miniſtred unto me:* this they had forgotten, and therefore asked, *Lord, when ſaw we thee hungry, or thirſty, or naked, or ſick, and in priſon, and miniſtred unto thee?* he remembred it, when they had forgotten it, and doth not onely remember it, but reward it too, and now they finde the comfort of it. With ſuch a remembrance doth

Saint-

Saint *Paul* comforts himſelfe, 2 *Tim.* 4. 7. *I have fought the good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the faith. Henceforth is layd up for me a crowne of righteouſneſs:* He was not afraid to ſing out his *Cupio diſſolvi, I deſire to be diſſolved.* Nor our Prophet in the Text, to make it his ſuite to the Lord, *To take away his ſoule*, when he *remembred, how zealous he had been for the Lord God of Hoſts*, while he was in the body. The very *Heathens* were ſenſible of this, and it was a great incitement to them to juſtice and honeſty, and all morall vertue: *Conſcientia benè acta vitæ, multorumque benefactorum recordatio jucundiſſima eſt:* The Conſcience of a life well ſpent, and the remembrance of much good done in his life time; O what a Cordiall it is to an old man, a dying man. And ſo is the contrary, the remembrance of a life ill ſpent, and of much evill done in a mans life time, as great a corrative at ſuch a time: *Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me, and makeſt me to poſſeſs the ſins of my youth, ſaith* Job, *cap.* 13. 25. and he none of the woriſt of men. Beloved, there will come a time when Conſcience awakened, and enlightened, will be ſerious with us, in calling us to account for things done in our life time, how we have ſpent our life, our time, and our Talents;

what good we have done with them ever ſince we came into the world: And what a ſad account is this, when a man can give no better account to God, nor his own Conſcience, but thus, That he hath lived upon earth forty, or fifty, or ſixty, or ſeventy years, or more, to doe nothing, but eate, and drink, and ſleep, and play, or worſe, and ſpent his life, *Aut nihil agendo*, in doing nothing; *Aut aliud agendo*, in doing things impertinent, which is as good as nothing; *Aut malè agendo*, or in doing evill, which is worſe then nothing, and now is going out of the world, before ever he hath thought of his errand, wherefore he came into it: If this be not to be an unprofitable ſervant, what is? and what his doome is, we have heard, and may reade, *Matthew* 25. Beloved, Let this Meditation teach us wiſedom, ſo to lay out our ſelves while we live in this world, ſo to improve our time, and our Talents, as that we may be able to give ſome account of them to God, and to our own Conſciences, ſo to live that we need not be afraid to dye, to be doing ſome good here in our life time, the remembrance whereof may yeeld us comfort in our ſickneſs, and hope in our death, ſo to lay out our ſelves in this world, that we may have ſomewhat to take to in the other

world,

world, when we ſhall leave this, and all that we have in it, and ſo ſhall we be great gainers by the change.

And ſo we have done with this third Inference alſo, deduc'd out of the Prophets third *Satis eſt, It is enough*, ſpoken in reference to what he had done, *Satis feci, I have done enough.* We now come to the fourth, as ſpoken in reference to his Age, and the years of his Life, *Satis vixi, I have lived long enough.*

In all likelihood, the Prophet was now an old man, and there are five things which perſwade us to think ſo.

Firſt, He was Preſident of the Colledge of the Prophets, and the Prophets Children, ſuch as were bred up in an Academicall, or Studious way, whereby they might be fitted for that Office, when called unto it; he was Preſident over them, and that was not a Charge for a Novice or a Neophite to undertake.

Secondly, He had wrought many great Miracles, and done great and ſignall ſervices among the people of God, (as his ſtory teſtifieth,) which were not the work of a ſhort time, and he could not be leſs then thirty years old when he was firſt Anointed unto the Office of a Prophet, for that

was, *Ætas Sacerdotalis*, as St. *Jerome* calls it; and if it were so still, the Church would receive no damage by it.

Thirdly, He was now commanded to Anoint *Elisha* Prophet to succeed in his roome; an Argument, that he had finished his course in Prophesying, and was now ready to resigne.

Fourthly, The last words of this Verse seems to import as much, *For I am no better then my Fathers*; they had their time here on earth, and are now dead and gone. I have had my time too, and what should I doe now, but follow after them, and be gathered unto them, *For I am no better then my Fathers.*

Fifthly, Because he makes it his request, *To be dissolved*, which if he were in his best Age, and strength, and fit and able to serve God and his people in that high Office, he would not have done, nor could without sin; in all these respects we may rationally conclude, he was now an old man. And although there be nothing in this world so desireable as that it should make a man in love with it in any state of his life, and in his best years; yet much more when his best dayes are gone and past, when he is entring into that state of life of which *David* saith, *It is but labour*

and

and ſorrow, and thoſe years approach of which he ſhall ſay, *I have no pleaſure in them*, may he with good reaſon be content to leave the World, and make it his requeſt, *That the Lord would take away his ſoule. When the keepers of the houſe tremble, and the ſtrong men bow themſelves ; when the grinders ceaſe, becauſe they are few, and they wax dark that look out at the windows : When the Almond Tree ſhall flouriſh, the Graſhopper ſhall be a burden, and all the daughters of ſinging ſhall be abaſed : When the Silver cord is lengthened, and the Golden Ewer broken, when the Pitcher is broken at the Well, and the Wheele broken at the Ciſterne, &c.* as that great Maſter of Wiſedom elegantly deſcribes old Age, *Eccleſ.* 12. 3. &c. then for an old *Barzillai*, *to refuſe the pleaſures of the Court* : Or an old *Simeon*, to ſing his *Nunc dimittis* : Or an aged *Paul*, *To deſire to diſſolved* : Or an old *Elijah*, to beſeech the Lord, *To take away his ſoule*, is no wonder, and all this as old Age meerly conſidered in it ſelfe, without any other grievances added to it to make it burdenſome, and irkſome, it is a burden to it ſelfe ; but who ever ſaw it come, but attended with a world of infirmities to make it more tedious, Catarrs, Rhumes, Aches, Palſies, akings in the Bones, Gouts, Dropſies, and in

all

all these, inability to help it selfe; *Senex bis puer*, it is a second Childhood, and 'tis a question whether the second be not worse then the first. Upon these, and some other considerations, it hath often been my Prayer to the Lord God, and is at this instant, That he would not detain this soule of mine in this Tabernacle of Clay wherein it hath now lodged these seventy years and upward, unto extremity of old Age. But farther, If to all these there should be added any externall grievances, poverty, and want, discontent in the Family, disobedience in prodigality of Children, divisions among Brethren, vexatious Suits, or the like, these were enough, not only to make an old man desire dissolution, but to hasten it, *and to bring his gray haires with sorrow to the Grave.*

Another discouragement to old Age that helps to take away the comfort of it is, That they are very apt to be despised, though it should not be so, God hath stampt such a reverend aspect in the very face and gray haires of an old man, as should command reverence from the younger sort, if they were not unreasonably uncivill; and hath commanded it too, *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the person of an old Man*; *Age is honourable, a Crowne of glory*, (saith *Solomon*)

mon,) the gray haires are the ſilver Crowne and Image of Gods eternity, who is deſcribed to have *his head and his haire white as Wooll, or Snow*, Revel. 1. 14. where he is pleaſed ſo farr to honour old Age, as to take a ſimile from the *gray haires*, to ſhaddow forth his own Erernity: yet ſuch is the corruption and vitiouſneſs of men, to make that the matter of their reproach, which ſhould be of their honour: what more ordinary, then call ſuch, *Old dotard, old foole, old any thing*, that may ſound reproachfully: *Honour thy Father that begat thee, and deſpiſe not thy Mother when ſhe is old*, (ſaith *Solomon*,) Prov. 23. 22. implying, that ſhe is never more ſubject to be deſpiſed, then when ſhe is old.

I will add but this one diſcouragement more which helps to take away from old men the comfort of their lives, and that is this, That they ſee the world grows weary of them, although they have deſerv'd never ſo well of it, yet, now they have done what good they can, and they ſee they can get no more good out of them, they grow weary of them, and would be ſhut of them. I have read of a barbarous Country, where, when men come to that extremity of old Age, that they grow uſeleſs, they knock them on the head;

and

and bury them. We are not grown to that barbariſme in *England*, but ſurely I doe beleeve, there are ſome that could wiſh it were ſo, ſome of their very neer relations, ſo their hand were not upon them, eſpecially if while they live they be any way troubleſome or chargeable to them; or at their death they look for ſome benefit by them: A ſtrange ingratitude, and moſt unreaſonable, that thoſe which receive moſt benefit from them, ſhould afford them leaſt reſpect, and be moſt weary of them; but theſe are great diſcouragements to old Age, which may make them as weary of the World, as the World is of them, and wiſh with all their hearts, with our Prophet in the Text, *That the Lord would take away their ſoule.* I will conclude this Point, with my Advice to ſuch, though they need not be put in mind that their day is far ſpent, and the night cloſing upon them, their Sunne is ſet, and they but as a Candle ſpent to the end, and blinking within the ſocket, their gray haires and wrinkled cheeks, their dim eyes, trembling hands, and weak knees, reade unto them continuall Lectures of mortality, and adviſe them to withdraw out of the tumultuous Sea of this troubleſome World, and to put in to the Haven of quiet reſt, and repoſe; to give themſelves

ſelves to Prayer and Meditation, to meditate upon the vanity of the time paſt, the ſhortneſs of the time preſent, and Eternity to come; to ſet their Houſe and their Heart in order, and to prepare for a change at hand, and all the few dayes of their appointed time to waite till that change doe come, that ſo it may be unto them a happy change, and they may with hope and comfort reſigne their ſoules into the hand of their Creator, and not be afraid to ſay with our Prophet in the Text, *Lord take away my ſoule*, which is the requeſt it ſelfe, which in old *Simeons* Language, I call the Prophets *Nunc dimittis*: In which are theſe three things; Firſt, The Perſon, *The Lord.* Secondly, The Act, *take away.* Thirdly, The Object, *my ſoule.*

From the firſt note, He might not take it away himſelfe, his ſoule was not his own, he might not of his own head diſmiſs it himſelfe, though it were in him in never ſo much bitterneſs; but he muſt ſtay the time till God that gave it him remands it again, in the meane time, *In his patience poſſeſs his ſoule, and all the dayes of his appointed time, waite untill his change ſhould come.* It is therefore a deſperate courſe of deſperate men, to antedate this Act of God by offering violence to

themſelves, and ſo letting out their own ſoules, as *Achitophel* and *Judas* did; ſuch think thereby to rid themſelves of ſome preſent griefe, or diſcontent, by ridding themſelves of their lives; but it is a deluſion of Satan to tell them ſo, herein they doe but leape out of the Frying Pan into the Fire, as the Proverbe is; for if this life did *ſcourge them with ſcourges*, that other, without the extraordinary mercy of God, *will torment them with Scorpions*. It was ſaid of *Hannibal*, *That he alwaies carried three or foure drops of ſtrong poyſon incloſed under the ſtone of his Ring, that at any time if he were hard ſet*, (as *Saul* once was upon the loſs of the day in a Battell againſt the *Philiſtines*,) *he might ſup them out, and prevent his falling into his enemies hands*, as *Saul* then, upon the ſame occaſion, *fell upon his Speare*, and with the help of the fugitive *Amalekite*, *Slew himſelfe*. And that ſtout hearted Prince, which being taken Priſoner, and carried about by the Conqueror in a ſilver Cage, impatient of his Captivity, and not having where-withall to make away himſelfe, beat out his braines againſt the barres of the Cage. We could inſtance in too many ſuch (God knows) which by hanging, drowning, poyſoning, and other kinds of death, have made away themſelves; theſe our

Law calls, *Felones de se*, Felons of themselves, and inflicts upon them as grievous a punishment as they are capable of being dead, by an ignominious buriall: And yet I dare not say peremptorily of all such, that they are certainly and eternally damned, though there be nothing visible to us whereby we may judge otherwise of them; yet who can limit the mercies of the most high, or know what secret communication of spirit there may be in them, between the beginning of the act, and the end of it, *Inter pontem & fontem*, between the bridge, & the brook; between the stirrup and the ground, mercy I ask't, mercy I found. *Judas* was not damned for hanging himselfe, but for his Treason; but to leave them to their own Master and Maker to stand or fall.

But Secondly, There are more *Felones de se*, selfe murderers, or which at least are accessary to their own deaths then these, though the Law doe not call them so. As first, All lewd and ungodly persons, which having not the feare of God before their eyes, take wicked courses, commit robberies, burglaries, rapes, felonies, treasons, murder, and other such capitall Crimes, such as that the Laws of the Land take hold of them, and cut them off as not worthy to live upon the Earth;

poor among the Society of men: *The cruell and blood thirsty man shall not live out halfe his dayes*: all such are at least accessary to their own deaths.

Secondly, All luxurious and intemperate persons, which by surfetting, drunkenness, and riotous living destroy themselves, fill their bodies with noxious humours, which breed in them mortall diseases, Surfets, Fevers, Dropsies, dead Palsies, and the like, by which they shorten their dayes. The *Philosopher* observ'd it long agoe, That *Plures gulà quam gladio*: There were more dyed by intemperance, then by the sword.

Lastly, All quarrelsome Persons, such as are apt to give offence to others, and to provoke others to give offence to them, and so from words they fall to blows, or to challenge one another to fight Duells, in which, both parties are guilty of Murder by the sixth Commandement; and as well he that is killed, as he that killeth, is at least accessary to his own death: In none of these cases can a man say confidently, *That the Lord doth take away his soule*, he throweth it away himselfe, and destroyeth himself.

2. From this the Prophets request unto the Lord, *To take away his soule*; we may inferr, That though a man may not take away *his own soul*, yet

in

in ſome caſes, he may make it his Suit to Almighty God, that he would doe it: So did old *Simeon* before mentioned: So did St. *Paul*, 2 Tim. 4. 6. So did *Moſes Numb* 11. 15. So did *Job*, *cap.* 6. 8. 9. So did *Jeremiah*, *cap.* 20. So did *Jonas*, *Jonah* 3. 3. So did our Prophet in the Text: I dare not juſtifie, nor excuſe all theſe which I have mentioned in this their requeſt; I ſuppoſe that in ſome of them it proceeded from paſſion, and impatience, and ſo it was their infirmity, and blameworthy; yea, in this our Prophet himſelf, if there were not in this his requeſt a *taeite* ſubmiſſion to the will of God, it could not be excuſed, but it proceeded from infirmity in him; but this doth not infringe the truth of my inference,

That in ſome caſes the Saints and Servants of Almighty God, may without ſin make it their Suite to him, That he will take away their ſoules, *that is, by death and diſſolution, ſeparate them from their bodies.*

Firſt, That ſo he may be taken out of a wicked world: Oh what a Hell is it to a pious ſoule to be ingag'd in a wicked world? For a *Lot* to live in *Sodome*: A *David* in *Meſhech*: It was a farr greater mercy which God ſhewed to *Enoch*, in taking him

out

out of the world from the Flood at hand, then that he shewed to *Noah* in preserving him in it.

Secondly, In case of long and lasting, sharpe and grievous Afflictions: Oh death, how sweet is the remembrance of thee to the soule that lives in bitternes? I doe not think the Lord did impute it for sin to *Job*, or *Jeremy*, that they were so weary of their bitter Lives, and did so often wish, *That their change might come.* Or, that King *Edward* the sixth did sin, when in his death bed-sickness, he prayd so earnestly, *Lord take me out of this wretched World.* Nor Dr. *Hamond*, who under the tortures of the Stone, whereof he dyed, was so often heard to say, *Lord, make hast:* though I doubt not but in all these, there was implyed a *tacit submission to the will of God.*

Thirdly, That a man may be taken away from the evill to come: This was a mercy promised to *Josiah* upon his humiliation, (2 *Kings* 22. 19. 20.) as it was the misery of his surviving Sonne *Zedekiah*, to see the evill which his Father was taken from, and to suffer in it. Wise men fore-see evill to come, in the causes of it, and in the fore-runners of it: And the Lord mentions it as a mercy, *That he will take them away from those evills:* and they may without sin, Pray for that mercy, *Isay* 57. 1.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, That they may be freed from the burden of the fleſh, and the bondage of corruption inherint in it; that Ground-Ivie in the Wall, which will never be pluckt out root and branch, till the Wall be thrown down: It was under the ſenſe of this that St. *Paul* cryes out, *Rom.* 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am: who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* this will never be done, but by the death of this body.

Fifthly, In extremity of old age, when a man becomes a burden to himſelfe, and others; when he is fallen into thoſe years of which *David* ſaith, *His life is nothing but labour and ſorrow*, and the years of which he ſhall ſay, *I have no pleaſure in them*: when not onely his body grows weak, but his mind alſo, and his intellectuall faculties faile, his underſtanding weak, his apprehenſion dull, his memory unfaithfull, his affections Childiſh, and he becomes unſerviceable, not able to doe that good which he hath done, and ſhould doe; when a man becomes thus ſuperannuate, he may doubtleſs without ſin, make it his ſuite to Almighty God, *To take away his ſoule.*

Uſe.

This Meditation is uſefull to comfort, and to confirme

confirme us against the feare of death, either of our selves, or our friends; why should we make that the object of our feare, which others have made the object of their hope and desire? Holy men, wise men, good men, men that have had a great interest in the world, have been willing to lay down all, and to leave all, and made it their suite, that they might dye, in assurance of a change for a better life. To help us to pass through this Gulfe with comfort and courage, weigh well but these two things:

1. What a world we leave behind us, the *Terminus à quo*.
2. What a world we have before us, the *Terminus ad quem*: And these two considerations will make the passage through that *medium* easie.

First, For the *Terminus à quo*, the world we leave behind us, a very sink of sin, a dunghill of uncleanness: ὅλος ὁ κοσμὸς ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ κεῖται, The whole World lyes in wickedness, as St. *John* speaks, nothing in it *but sinne, and sorrow, and travaile, and trouble, and malice, and mischief*, and that which may well make any wise man out of love with it, and

and even weary of it: The beſt things in it which men make moſt account of, have been weighed to our hands by the wiſeſt of the Sonnes of Men, and upon the tryall found, *To be lighter then vanity it ſelfe*; not onely vanity, *but vexation of ſpirit.* For firſt, They are all tranſitory. Secondly, They are not all ſatisfactory. Thirdly, All imbitter'd with ſo many croſs Ingredients, that there is no true contentment in them, nor true comfort to be taken out of them. We could ſhew you examples of the greateſt of men, Kings, Emperours, Lords of the world, ſuch as have had as much of the glory of it, and all other worldly good in it, as the world could give or lend; yet have ſeen ſo farr into the vanity and emptineſs of it, as to deſpiſe it, to lay down all, and take themſelves unto a private and monaſticall life, which is a death to the world, and the ſhaddow of death it ſelfe.

Secondly, For the *Terminus ad quem*, Conſider what a world (in dying) we are going to, it would require a world of time, and words to deſcribe it; the beſt deſcription of it is to deſcribe it to be ſuch (for the tranſcendency of the glory of it) as that it cannot be deſcribed, *For neither hath the eye ſeen, nor the eare heard, nor can the heart of Man comprehend the great things that God hath prepared*

for them that love him, 1 Cor. 2. 9. St. *Paul* shaddows it out in part, *Heb.* 12. 22. where he shows the happiness of the Church militant, in their communion with the Church triumphant, thus: *But you are come to Mount Sion, and to the City of the living God, the Cœlestiall Jerusalem, and to the company of innnumerable Angels: And to the Assembly and Congregation of the first borne, whose names are Written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just Men made perfect: And to Jesus the Mediatour of the new Testament, and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things then the blood of* Abel. Here's a description in part of the Place, and Society which we shall goe to, when we shall come to be joyned with the Church triumphant in glory; now be you well assured, that all things els there, are suitable to these, which must needs render it transcendently joyous, and glorious. O! if we could but draw the Curtaine of Heaven, and look in the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, to see the joy, and glory that is there, we would never care for this world more, the most pretious things in it would be despised in our eyes, our whole life would be nothing, but a *Cupio dissolvi, & esse cum Christo: I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ*; and we would long for the time,

when

when *the Lord would take away our soul, that we might be translated thither.* I reade of one *Cleombrotus*, that hearing *Plato* discoursing of the immortality of the soul, and the happines of the other life to come, *Threw himself headlong off from a high Rock to quit himself of this life, that so he might enter into that other life, that* Plato *so much commended:* And if a *Heathen* man could be so sensible of advantaging himself by his change into the other life, upon those weak grounds which *Plato*'s Philosophy could give, as to hasten his own death upon the hope of it: Surely we that are Christians, and have better grounds to build our faith and hope upon, then any *Plato*'s Philosophy could give; may with much more Comfort think on Death, with much more hope and confidence waite for it: and when it comes, bid it welcome, as our friend that comes to free our soul out of the prison of the body, the sole impediment of it's perfection, and to open the doore to let us into a better world, and into a better life. Thus of the Person to whom he makes his suit, *The Lord.*

2. Now we are to consider of the Act, *Take away my soule.* How doth the Lord take away souls?

Not by annihilation, or reducing them to nothing, as at the first Creation: Nor by laying them a sleep together with their bodies, till the *Resurrection*, the Opinion of the *Arabians*: Nor by a *Metempsuchosis*, transmitting them into some other body, to informe them: Not by fixing them, as Starrs in the Firmament: Nor

by ſending them into purgatory, as the Papiſts teach: But thou that gaveſt it me, take it unto thy ſelf, either by thine own immediate power and grace, who art a Spirit, and the God of the ſpirits of all fleſh; or by the Miniſtery of thy good Angells, let them be ready to receive it, at the parting of it out of my body, as they did the ſoul of *Lazarus*, and to carry it up to reſt and glory: Thus, *Lord take away my ſoule.*

From hence, note firſt, That our ſouls are immortall, they dye not with the body; but when the body at the *diſſolution returns to the earth, from whence it was taken, the ſoul returns to God that gave it:* All the expreſſions of holy men dying, imports as much: *Lord Jeſus receive my ſpirit*, ſaith St. *Stephen*. *Father, into thy hands I commend my ſpirit*, ſaith our Saviour: *Lord take away ſoul*, ſaith our Prophet; all expreſſing their faith in this truth, *That their ſouls were immortal. Feare not them that can kill the body, and are not able to kill the ſoul*, ſaith our Saviour: So then, the ſoul cannot be killed. Our bleſſed Lord diſputing with the *Sadduces* concerning the Reſurrection, *Mat.* 22. tells them out of the Scriptures, *That God was the God of* Abraham, *the God of* Iſaac, *and the God of* Jacob, who were dead and buried a thouſand years before; and from thence concludeth, *the immortality of the ſoul*; in aſmuch, *as God was not the God of the dead, but of the living*, ver. 32. their ſpirits did never dye, their ſouls were ſtill alive, and in being, and he was their God.

Uſes.

Uſes. First, It is of Uſe to quiet our ſpirits, and to ſatisfie our minds, ſometimes troubled upon the conſideration of the perplexities of Providence, in the croſs diſpenſation of evill and good, to the good and the evill here in this world; the unravelling of this Clue, of the ſouls immortality from the beginning to the end, will guide us through this Labyrinth, ſo that in the end, we ſhall ſay, *The wayes of the Lord are right*: when a day ſhall come, when it ſhall be ſaid to the *Epicures* of this world, which have had *their portion* in this life, as in *Luke* 16. 25. *Sonne, Remember you have had your pleaſure in your life time, and my ſervants received pain: now they are comforted, and you are tormented.*

2. This Meditation is of Uſe to comfort, and to confirme us againſt the fear of death, either our own, or our friends, inaſmuch, as beleeving in the Lord, *we ſhall live, though we dye: And he that liveth, and beleeveth in him, ſhall never dye eternally.* Indeed, we ſhall not dye at all, totally; for though we lay down our bodies into the earth to ſleep; yet our ſpirits ſhall not dye at all, but being delivered from the burden of the fleſh, ſhall live with the Lord, and be tranſlated into a ſtate of joy and felicity, *Et meliore ſui parte ſuperſtes erit*, The better part is ſtill living, and therefore the Scripture will hardly call it a *death*, but *a Sleep, a Change, a Diſſolution, a Departure, a Tranſlation.*

3. It is of uſe for the contempt of this world, in which

which we have no ſure footing, and of the beſt things of this world, of which we have no better hold, nor longer enjoyment, but for this ſhort & uncertain life.

4. This Meditation of the immortality of the ſoul, is of ſpeciall uſe, to teach and to admoniſh to prepare, and to provide for that our future condition, to lay up for our ſelves treaſure in Heaven, that we may have ſomething to take to, when we come into the other world, when we ſhall leave this, and all that we have in it behind us, to make us friends of the Mammon of iniquity, that when time comes, they may receive us into the everlaſting habitations, to lay here a good foundation againſt the time to come, that ſeeing our ſouls are immortall, and ſhall have an eternall being, it may be in well being; that ſeeing they ſhall live eternally, it may be in bliſs and happineſs, now is the time to provide for it. O how miſerable will be the condition of thoſe ſouls, which having loſt their time here, when this life is ended, ſhall be ſwallowed up into eternity, and all that while ſhall live in woe and miſery, in pain and torment, eaſeleſs, endleſs, and remedileſs? How much better had it been for ſuch if they had never been born? Or being born, that their ſouls had dyed with their bodies? or living after them, there had been ſome period of time wherein they might have been extinguiſhed? But when they muſt ſo continue for ever, *That the worme ſhall ne-*

ver

ver dye, nor the fire never goe out, that they ſhall continue in torment to all eternity: Who can conceive the miſery of it? That word *eternity*, into what a deep bottomeleſs gulfe doth it ſwallow up the mind that thinks upon it? Great wonder it is, and a miracle indeed, that a point of ſuch great importance, and high concernment, ſhould be no more heeded and regarded: Some live, as if they had no ſouls at all; or if they have any, that they are but as the ſouls of bruits, which periſh with their bodies; and well were it with them if they did ſo: they live, as if they never thought to dye, and dye, as if they never thought to riſe again; they have no hope in their death, nor any care of their immortall ſoules ever after. To theſe I ſay no more but this, *Lord have mercy upon their poor miſerable ſoules, they will have time enough hereafter, when it is too late, to ſee their error, and to repent of this their ſtupidity and ſecurity.*

Secondly, Note here the holy and heavenly expreſſions of the Saints and Servants of the Lord at their departure out of this life: *O Lord, I have waited for thy ſalvation*, ſaith the Patriarke *Jacob* upon his death bed, *Gen.* 49. 18. *Lord now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace*, (ſaid old *Simeon*, *Luke* 2. 29.) *for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation.*

Saint

Saint *Stephen* the holy Martyr, with theſe words breath'd out his ſoule, *Lord Jeſus receive my ſpirit*, *Acts* 7. 59. Our Lord himſelfe upon the Croſs, giving up the ghoſt, with theſe words breath'd his laſt, *Father, into thy hands I commend my ſpirit*, (*Luke* 23. 46.) in ſenſe the ſame with the Prophet in the Text, *Lord take away my ſoule.* With ſuch holy expreſſions as theſe, did holy Men dying take their leave of the World, and breathe out their ſpirits. I could inſtance in many more, Biſhops, Martyrs, Confeſſors, and other holy men and Women dying, ſome in my own hearing; others in the hearing of other Men, and recorded in the ſtories of their Lives and Deaths, with the gratious expreſſions utter'd by them in their death-beds, in words full of faith, full of hope, full of comfort, much to the edification of all that were preſent; and it is a great advantage to be preſent with ſuch men, at ſuch a time, for then are they moſt ſerious, then are their ſoules looſing from the priſon of their bodies, and are *prominentes*, (as it were looking out before they take their flight) then have they clearer Viſion of things then they had before, when they were in the cloſe priſon of their bodies, the light breaks in at the chinks, and at the doores and windows opening to

let

let out the soule; then have many of the Saints had rare Discoveries, and Revelations, by which they have Prophesied of things to come; and the words of dying men, are much to be heeded and regarded. But if you would have the Lord to draw neer unto you in these wayes when you are dying, you must draw neer to God in his wayes while you are living; *You must acquaint your selfe with God, and be at peace with him*, as *Eliphas* speaks in *Job*, *cap* 22. 21. *you must live in communion with him, you must call upon his Name, prayse him, and give him thanks, worship him, and doe his will; then will he own you, and be mercifull to you at that time, and draw neer unto you, and have a care of your soule that it shall not miscarry: but he himselfe will take it away.*

But secondly, If you would have the Lord to *take away your soule*, you must keep your soul with all diligence, and preserve it pure, and undefiled, that the Lord may own it, and accept it, and place it among the holy souls of his Saints, and his redeemed ones. The Lord our God is a holy God, of pure eyes, which cannot behold any thing that is impure, but with indignation; and there is nothing more odious to him then sinne and corruption, nor which renders us more abo-

minable in his ſight: Compared therefore to Leproſie, to the Leopards ſpots, to menſtruous pollution: If therefore our ſouls ſhall be preſented unto him ſtained with ſinne, polluted with uncleanneſs, defiled with ſpirituall leproſie of corruption, ſpotted with noyſome luſts and pleaſures; Will the Lord look at them? will he own them? will he accept them? Can we deſire the Lord, or hope that he will *take away ſuch ſouls?* or imploy his good Angels to fetch them, as he did to receive the ſoule of *Lazarus* and carry it into *Abraham's* boſome? No, there are other ſoule-gatherers ready to take away ſuch ſouls, even thoſe which were imployed to fetch away the ſoule of the *covetous rich Man* in the Goſpel, *Luke* 12. 20. If we would have the Lord to take away our ſouls, we muſt preſent them pure unto him, without ſpot, and blameleſs: They muſt be waſh't cleane in the blood of the Lambe, and cleanſed by the ſanctifying vertue of the holy Ghoſt; our Conſciences, the higheſt faculty of the ſoule, *Muſt be purged from dead works, to ſerve the living God.* We muſt purge our ſelves *from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, and grow up in true holineſs in the feare of the Lord:* The *Place* which our ſouls are to *goe to is holy, the Company holy, the exerciſes holy,* and ſo muſt

muſt our ſouls be alſo, that they may be ſuitable to all the reſt, and then the Lord will take away our ſouls, and place them amongſt them in joy, happineſs, and glory. Thus of *The Act. The Object* followes, [*My ſoule.*]

2. *Branch.* The ſoule is the ſpirituall part of Man, the principall and eſſentiall part whereof Man doth conſiſt, the fountaine of life, ſenſe, and motion, which by the ſpirits vitall, naturall, animall, the ſouls curſitors running into all the parts of the body, actuates and informes it, and uſeth it as an Organ or Inſtrument whereby to performe it's ſeverall operations. This ſoule of man is pretious in theſe ſeven reſpects.

Firſt, In reſpect of the Fountaine of it, it proceeds originally from the immediate breathing of God himſelfe: For when God had made Man of *the duſt of the earth, he breath'd into him the breath of life, and Man became a living ſoul, Gen.* 2. 7.

Secondly, In reſpect of the rare faculties of it, the Underſtanding, the Will, the Memory, the Affections, Reaſon, Judgement, Wiſedome, Knowledge, Conſcience, the higheſt of all the reſt, conſidered in both the parts of it, *συνεσις*, and *φρονησις*, the one, *The Treaſure*; the other, *The Soules Controuller, &c.*

Thirdly, In reſpect of the immortality of it, it dyes not with the body; but being taken out of the body is preſerv'd unto Eternity.

Fourthly, In reſpect of the Image of God once ſtampt upon it, which though miſerably defac't ſince by the fall, yet not ſo utterly raz'd out, but there are goodly lineaments of that Image yet left upon it: Neither is it ſo irrecoverable, but that by the ſpirit of grace, and the grace of ſanctification, it may be ſo repaired and renewed, as that the ſoule may be, and is ſaid ſtill, *Thereby to be made partàker of the Divine Nature*, 2 Peter 1. 4. not in the ſubſtance of the Deity; but in holineſs, and righteouſneſs, wiſedome, knowledge, goodneſs, love, and light, which are as the beames of the Image of God ſhining upon it.

Fifthly, In reſpect of the purchaſe of it, *It is the price of blood*, not of Bulls, and Goats, *but of the Divine blood of Jeſus Chriſt our Redeemer*, 1 Peter 1. 19.

Sixthly, The pretiouſneſs of ſouls may appear, by the pains and coſt that Satan and his Inſtruments will be at to gaine a ſoule; they will compaſs Sea and Land to gaine a ſoule; give a Kingdome for a ſoule. *Mat.* 4. 8. *All the Kingdoms of the world, with the glory of them*, Omnia hæc tibi dabo,

dabo, *All theſe things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worſhip me*, ver. 9.

Seventhly, By the great care that Almighty God hath taken to preſerve ſouls, and to ſave them from periſhing; he hath given his Word to direct them, his Miniſters to inſtruct them, his Sacraments to confirme them, his Spirit to guide them, and his Angels to guard them, and all this to preſerve them, and to ſave them from periſhing.

In all theſe reſpects, it appears that ſouls are pretious: Our bleſſed Lord, which well knew the price of ſouls, lays one ſoule in one ballance, and the whole world in the other againſt it; and upon the tryall, tells us, That one ſoule weighs downe the whole world in the other ſcale: *What ſhall it profit a Man to win the whole world, and to loſe his ſoule?*

Uſe.

1. It ſhould teach all men to value their ſouls according to the worth of them, and not to deſtroy them, nor to paſs them away ſo careleſly, and inconſiderately, as ordinarily men doe to their eternall undoing: Some deſperately wound them to death, by deſperate, willfull, and preſumptuous ſins: *Heale my ſoule, for I have ſinned againſt thee:*

thee; implying, that by ſinne he had wounded it: Some ſell their ſouls, and that for triflles, that are worth nothing; for pleaſures of ſinne, which are but for a ſeaſon; for treaſures of wickedneſs, which profit nothing; for ſatisfying ſome ſinfull luſts, which are worſe then nothing: Some give away their ſouls for nought, for ſins in which there is neither pleaſure, nor profit; as Curſing, Swearing, idle and lewd Communication, and the like, theſe make the worſt bargains of all: Others pawne their ſouls, they will give themſelves liberty to walk in the ſight of their own eyes, and in the wayes of their own heart, and to ſerve their luſts but for ſuch a time, and then they will take up, and repent, and recover themſelves, and their ſouls again, as if it were in their own will, and power, to come in when they will: All theſe make ill bargains, and paſs away their pretious ſouls for a thing of nought, which all the Kingdoms of the world cannot buy again: We ſee this, we heare it, and we condemne them for it; yet are there dayly amongſt us that are guilty of the ſame folly, and by Covetouſneſs, Voluptuouſneſs, Ambition, Malice, Perjury, and the like, ſell themſelves, and their ſouls for leſs, and paſs them away upon worſe termes then they have done:

Adam

Adam ſold himſelfe for *an Apple*: *Eſau* for a *Meſſ of Pottage*: *Achan* for a *Wedge of Gold*: *Ahab* for a *Vineyard*: *Judas* for *thirty pieces of ſilver*. How many are there to be found amongſt us which for leſs matters will lye, will ſweare, will forſweare, will ſteale, deceive, cheate, and coſen, and what not? That to ſatisfie their baſe, ſinfull, and unreaſonable luſts, and humours, will part with a good Conſcience, forfeit the favour of God, their hope of Heaven, their intereſt in Chriſt, and in the Goſpel, ſell themſelves, and ſoules, and all for leſs then a Meſs of Pottage. The reſolution of *Balaam* was good and honeſt, juſt and religious, if he had kept it as well, *Numb.* 24. 13. *If* Balak *would give me his houſe full of ſilver and gold, I would not goe beyond the Word of the Lord, to doe more or leſs*: Let it be the reſolution of every ſoul, and God give us grace and power to keep it.

2. Are ſouls ſo pretious? Then let us look to them carefully, preſerve them charily, as we would doe our chiefeſt Jewells; Keep thy ſoule with all diligence, examine the ſtate of it, ſee it want nothing of that which ſhould be for the happineſs, and the proſperity of it: Our care is much for the body, *What ſhall we eate, what ſhall we drinke, wherewithall ſhall we be clothed?* in the meane while the ſoule

ſoule is neglected, ſet by, and leaſt look't after; but as our Saviour ſaies in a like caſe, *Mat.* 6. 25. *Is not the body better then the rayment?* So ſay I, *Is not the ſoule better then the body? Is there any compariſon between the Jewell and the Cabinet that it is layd up in?* It was *Martha*'s reproofe, *That ſhe cared for many things more then ſhe needed: And for the one thing that was more neceſſary, leſs.* It is our juſt reproofe in this caſe; We enquire after the health and welfare of our friends, and after their proſperity, how they thrive in this world; but without any regard to their ſpirituall eſtate, and the welfare and proſperity of their ſouls. St. *John*, in his Epiſtle to *Gaius*, with a more ſpirituall ſalutation, hath a more ſpeciall eye to the proſperity of his ſoule; *Beloved, I wiſh chiefly that thou doe proſper, as thy ſoule proſpereth*, 3 *John* 1. 2. *David* did more rejoyce in the good the Lord had done for his ſoule, then for all the good he had done to him, and for him in his body, in his eſtate, or in any other his relations: *Hearken to me* (ſaith he) *all you that feare God, and I will tell you what the Lord hath done for my ſoule*: The Lord had done great things for him otherwiſe, and he could have given them a large narrative of them; but in his remembrance of his great favours to him, he paſſes

by

By all these, and mentions the other, as farr greater then all the rest, *I will tell you what the Lord hath done for my soul:* So the care of all those holy men dying, which I have mentioned, was chiefly for the safety of their souls, *Lord Jesus receive my spirit*, *Acts* 7. 59. *Father into thy hands I commend my spirit.* And in the *Text*, *Lord take away my soul:* Though the bodies of the Saints dying, are not to be neglected, but decently to be inter'd, as in hope and expectation of a blessed *Resurrection*, as the body of St. *Stephen* was, and the body of our blessed Lord; yet the care they had of their souls, swallowed up all the care of their bodies, so that it is not so much as mentioned by them, nor by our Prophet in the *Text*, but onely his soul, *Lord take away my soul.*

3. Are souls so pretious? Then this is a severe admonition to us (that have undertaken, *Curam animarum*, the care of souls) to look well to our *charge*, as such as must give an account of the greatest trust in the world, even *the souls of Gods people committed to our charge.* I cannot but tremble, when I reade St. *Paul* giving up his account to God, to his People, and to his own Conscience in this matter, *Acts* 20. 26. *I am free from the blood of all Men.* What blood doth St. *Paul* here speak of? he was no *Sword Man*, there was no fear of his shedding any mans

blood by violence: How comes he to clear himself from blood? (Bel.) the blood here meant is more pretious then the life-blood of man can be, it is the *blood of ſouls*: implying, *That if he had not faithfully, and conſcionably performed the duties of his Paſtorall charge amongſt them, he had been guilty of the blood of ſouls.* Oh let this ſink deep into our hearts, that we may not become guilty of the blood of ſouls: How earneſtly ought we to endeavour the ſalvation of our people, as of our ſelves? and at the hour of death to Pray, *That the Lord would be merciſull to them, and take away their ſouls.*

Queſt. But here now ariſeth a great queſtion, a grand inquiry, not without great caution and ſobriety to be reſolved, *Touching the ſtate of ſouls ſeparated, and taken out of the body, What becomes of them afterward? Whether upon their ſeparation they doe preſently enter into that ſtate in which they are to remain, and continue during this vaſt ſpace of Eternity, without all change or alteration of their condition?*

Anſ. I answer no; For the ſoule of man from the time of it's firſt being in him, whether by Creation, or by inſuſion, or by traduction generation I dispute not; nor of the præexiſtence of it before, an Opinion that hath great Patrons too, eſpecially among the Philoſophers, the Gymnoſophiſts

phists of *Egypt*, the Brachmans of *India*, the Magi of *Persia*, and the *Jewish Cabalists*, and among them, some Christians also, *Origen* for one; but I wave that dispute too: But I date my discourse from the souls first being in the body, from that beginning it passes it's immortality under three conditions, or a three-fold estate, every one of them different from other. The first is the state of the soule during the time of it's being in the body, which it doth actuate and informe. The second is the state of it between the time of the separation of it from the body, by dissolution, and the re-union of it again with the body at the Resurrection, & the day of Judgement. And the third is from that day to Eternity, and for ever after: That these three states of the soule are different one from the other is evident enough: Of the first of these we have experience in this life, while our souls are in our bodies, which are given unto us to actuate, and informe them, and to use them as Organs, or Instruments for glorifying God by them, and doing good: *Glorifie God in your bodies, and in your spirits, for they are his*, 1 Cor. 6. 20. this is done, by giving up the faculties of the one, and the parts of the other: *Not as members of unrighteousness to unrighteousness, but*

as instruments of righteousness unto holiness, and accordingly as we have so done, shall we give an account unto God, in the day of account: *For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, to render an account for the things done in the body, whether they be good or evill*, 1 Cor. 5. 15. Therefore now is the time of working, now is the time of doing our selves good, now is the time of laying a good foundation for the time to come, now is the time of laying up that, which may be for the furtherance of our account then; now in this first estate of the soule, while it is in the body, must we provide for the well-being of it in the second estate, and in the third, and to Eternity: Now as this first estate of the soule in the body is different from the second estate of it, as it is separated from the body; so is that second estate of it out of the body different from the third estate of it, when it shall be re-united to the body again, and put into that estate in which it shall remain for ever, and to all Eternity. It is the generall Opinion of men, but withall, a generall mistake, That as soon as ever the soule is separated from the body, it passes immediately into that estate either of joy & glory, or of misery and torment, in which it shall remain for ever, without any alteration. True it

is,

is, That at the ſeparation of the ſoule from the body, there is a particular judgement paſſes upon it, by which it is made known to it, what ſhall become of it Eternally, and is preſently put into the beginnings, either of the one, or the other, and into a ſtate previous to that third eſtate, in which it is to remain for ever, without alteration: but that either the ſouls of wicked men are immediately upon their ſeparation from the body caſt into that extremity of miſery and torment which is prepared for them: Or that the ſouls of the juſt doe then paſs into that heigth of joy and glory which God hath prepared for them, I doe confidently deny, and ſhall prove the contrary in both the parts of it. And firſt for the ſouls of wicked men, that they are not upon their ſeparation from the body caſt into that extremity of torment which is prepared for them: I prove by an Argument *à Majori*, thus:

The very Devills themſelves are not yet caſt into that extremity of torment that they are condemned unto. Therefore the ſouls of wicked men are not immediately upon their ſeparation caſt into thoſe torments.

The Conſequence of this Argument is clear, for no man will judge the ſtate of wicked men to

be

be worse then the state of Devills. The Antecedent I prove by two clear testimonies of Scripture; The first out of St. *Mat.* 8. 29. where those fierce Devills which had possessed two men among the *Gergesens*, seeing Christ comming towards them, are stricken with terror at his presence, and cry out, *What have we to doe with thee, Jesus thou Sonne of God? Art thou come to torment us before the time?* They knew they were condemn'd to torment, but there was a time set when they should be cast into it, but that time was not yet come; and therefore seeing him comming towards them, they cry out against him, as if he came to antedate their misery, by casting them into it before the time, *Art thou come to torment us before the time?* The other proofe is both a confirmation of the truth in hand, and an illustration of this Text: It is in the Epistle of *Jude*, ver. 6. *The Angels also which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in chains of darkness, unto the Judgement of the great day*; where you have the time when they shall be cast into that extremity of torment unto which they are condemned, at the *judgement of the great-day*; and the estate that they are in, in the mean time, they are reserv'd in chains of darkness, the *chains* noting, the safe keeping

and

and ſecuring of them, that thus can no ways make their eſcape: And the *darkneſs*, noting their diſmall and uncomfortable condition all that while: *They are reſerv'd in chains of darkneſs, unto the Judgement of the great day*; an expreſſion borrowed from the ſtate of condemned priſoners, which after they are condemn'd, are ſecured in chains or fetters, and caſt into the dungeon, and there reſerved unto the day of Execution. And this is a ſufficient proofe of the truth of this aſſertion in the firſt part of it, as touching the ſouls of wicked men, *That the ſtate of their ſouls, from the day of their ſeparation from their bodies, untill the day of Judgement, is not the ſame that it ſhall be after that day, though it be a woefull eſtate too, as will farther appear in the ſequel of this diſcourſe.* We are now to make good this Propoſition in the other part of it, Concerning the ſouls of the juſt, that they enter not preſently upon their diſſolution into the fullneſs of joy and glory intended them, and prepared for them. And for that I alledge, *Rev.* 6. 9. 10. 11. where at the opening of the fifth Seale, St. *John* ſees under *the Altar, the ſouls of them that were killed for the Word of God, and for the teſtimony which they maintained. And they cryed with a loud voyce, ſaying, How long Lord, how long, holy and true,*

doſt

doſt thou not Judge, and aveinge our blood on them that dwell on the Earth? And long white robes were given to every one, and it was ſaid unto them, that they ſhould reſt for a little ſeaſon, untill their fellow ſervants, and their brethren that ſhould be killed, (even as they were) were fulfilled. This Scripture makes for our purpoſe all along; For firſt, Who are they that here complain? the Text ſayes, *They were Martyrs*, and thoſe are Saints of the firſt liſt; and if their ſouls were not received into the fulneſs of joy and happineſs at their diſſolution, what ſouls are? But that they were not, it appears, Firſt, By their complaint, *How Long Lord? how long?* Secondly, By the anſwer given unto them, perſwading ſtill *to waite for a ſeaſon, and to poſſeſs their ſouls with patience, til the reſt of the number of their brethren were accompliſhed*, without whom they could not be made perfect, and that could not be till the Reſurrection, and the Generall Judgement at the great day. *Aquinas* doth excellently deſcribe *Summum bonum* or the higheſt felicity to be, *Quies Mentis*; or *Acquieſcentia Mentis in ultimo fine*; the reſt, or acquieſcence of the mind in the laſt end, beyond which nothing can be deſired to make it more happy: But thoſe ſouls which yet cry, *How long Lord? how long?* doe declare, That they have

not

not yet attained their *ultimate* end ; and therefore they doe not perfectly *acquiesce*, but are in expectation of a farther degree of fuller happiness yet to be given unto them. And thus I have made good this *Proposition*, in both the Parts, *That the souls separated from the body by Death, are not in the same state from the time of their separation, to the time of their re-union again at the day of Judgement, that they shall be in, after that day, to all eternity.*

But then, me thinks I heare you ask me, *In what state are they then during that time? Where are they? Or what becomes of them?*

And to this *Quærie*, I shall endeavour to satisfie you too, and that, *Ad partes*, to both the parts of it, both as it concerns the souls of the just, and the souls of the unjust and wicked men. And first, as to the souls of wicked men; If you ask me *where?* or *in what state they are?* I answer, They are in the same state, and in the same places that the evill Angells are in, and what that was, you heard even now out of *Jude* 6. they are secured in prison, they are with them *reserved in chains unto the judgement of the great day.* For proofe of this, take these two Scriptures ; the first in 1 *Pet.* 3. 19. The second in *Luke* 12. 20. In the first, St. *Peter* speaking of the death of Christ, saith thus, *ver.* 18. *Christ*

alſo ſuffered for ſinners, the juſt for the unjuſt, that he might bring us to God, who was put to death as concerning the fleſh, but was quickned in the Spirit. By which ſpirit alſo, he went and Preach't to the ſpirits in priſon, v. 19. If ye ask, *What ſpirits?* he tells you, ver. 20. *Thoſe ſpirits which in time paſt were diſobedient:* In what time? In the times of *Noah*, and before the Flood, for ſo it followeth; *When once the long ſuffering of God abode in the dayes of* Noah, *while the Ark was preparing: wherein few, that is, eight perſons were ſaved from periſhing in the waters.* There you have St. *Peter* plainly interpreting himſelfe, that the ſpirits here mentioned, are the ſpirits of the ſinners of the old world, which periſhed in the Flood, but their ſpirits periſhed not, neither were they preſently ſent to the Lake of everlaſting Burnings, but they are ſecured in Priſon, as the evill Angels are, and ſo reſerved unto the Judgement of the great day. That place in St *Luke*, ſpeaks the ſame thing, where the Voyce is heard ſpeaking to the ſecure Epicure, ſinging a *requiem* to his own ſoule, *Soule, take thine eaſe, eate, drink, and be merry, thou haſt goods layd up for many years:* Alas! he dreams of many years, when he hath not many houres to live: *Stulte hac nocte, Thou foole, this night ſhall they fetch away thy ſoule: then*

whoſe

whoſe ſhall theſe things be? Nay, Whoſe ſhalt thou be? *This night ſhall* they *fetch away thy ſoule:* Which *they?* The evill Angels. When good men dye, the good Angells are ready to receive their ſouls, as they did the *ſoule of Lazarus*, Luke 16. *and carry them into* Abraham's *boſome.* But when wicked men dye, the evill Angells fetch away their ſouls, *Thou foole, this night ſhall they fetch away thy ſoule:* And whither (think you) were they to carry it? but to their own Quarters, to thoſe Priſons in which themſelves are ſecur'd, as *in chains unto the judgement of the great day.*

But then here ariſeth another Queſtion, *What thoſe Priſons are?* Or, *Where it is, that they are ſecured unto that day?*

And to this I Anſwer. There are three vaſt, large, and ſpacious Priſons, in which the evill Angells are ſecured, and with them the ſouls of wicked men, unto the Judgement of the great day. And they are,

1. *The Aire.*
2. *The Earth.*
3. *The Sea.*

Firſt, The *Aire*, with all the ſeverall Regions of it, into which the Apoſtate Angells were bani-

ſhed: When for their rebellion againſt their Creator, they were expell'd out of Heaven. For this, ſee St. *Paul*, in his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, *cap.* 6. 12. *You wreſtle not againſt fleſh and blood, but againſt Principalities and Powers, and ſpiritnall wickedneſſes in high places*: And what? or who are thoſe ſpirituall wickedneſſes, but thoſe evill ſpirits? And what are thoſe high places, but the Regions of the Aire? And therfore is the Principall of the Devills, called, *The Prince that ruleth in the Aire*; for even amongſt them there is Order, and ſubordination: We reade of a *Prince among Devills*, Epheſ. 2. 2.

The ſecond of thoſe Priſons, is, The *Earth*; and therein firſt, The vaſt and howling Wilderneſſes, and Places uninhabited, where no foot doth tread, but where Oſtriches dos dwell, where *Ziim* doth boade, and the *Satyres* dance.

Secondly, The vaſt caverns and concavities within the earth, amongſt which the hollow mountains of *Ætna*, *Veſuuius*, and in *Ireland* that hollow vault, called, Saint *Patriarchs Purgatory*, famous in ſtory: But in *America* many ſuch, and more evident dens of Dæmons: But above all theſe, the vaſt hollowneſs in the very heart, and Center of the Earth; for who knows what vaſt and ſpatious receptacles there may be for ſuch ſpirits?

ſits? It is not unreaſonable, nor againſt any Article of Faith, or of Scripture to conceive, That there is in the very heart and Center of the Earth, ſuch a vaſt hollowneſs, both for a fit receptacle for ſuch ſpirits, and by which that vaſt and weighty body is buoy'd up that it ſink not any way towards the Circumference on any ſide, though no way ſupported, neither by Poaſts, nor Pillars. What is it that ſuſtains the vaſt and weighty Ships in the Sea, with all the Anchors, Ordnance, and Fraught in them, but the hollowneſs of them? What is it that ſuſtains the Clouds in the Aire, infinitely greater, and more weighty then they, ſo as they fly to and fro, but as *bottles in the Aire*, as *Job* ſpeaks, or *like bladders full of winde*, that they fall not down in great daſhes, enough to make another Deluge, but the hollowneſs of them? That ſuch a hollowneſs there is in them, appears by the Lightning, the Thunder, and the Thunder-bolts, and the ſpirituall vapour that proceeds out of them, when they break of ſuch force, that it penetrates, and burns, and breaks, and tears in peeces all that it lights upon: And who can deny, but it is agreeable to reaſon, that there may be ſuch a hollowneſs in the heart of the earth, whereby it may, by the power and providence of the Creator,

be

be ſuſteined in the place which he hath appointed for it; and alſo be a fit receeptacle of evill ſpirits, where they may be ſecured as in a Priſon, and reſerved unto the Judgement of the great day. In the Apoſtolicall Creed, we profeſs to beleeve, *That Chriſt deſcended into Hell.* And St. *Paul* tells us, *He deſcended* εἰς τὰ κατώτερα μέρη τῆς γῆς, *into the lower parts of the Earth:* This cannot be underſtood of the deſcent of his body by his buriall, that ſcarce went into the Earth at all, but was layd in the Sepulchre which *Joſeph* of *Arimathea* had made for himſelfe in his Garden, which was above the ground, or, at leaſt, the moſt part of it, if any part at all of it were under, or within the ground, it was not ſo low, as that we may ſay of it, *It was in the lower parts of the Earth.* How then will you underſtand this Article of our *Lords deſcent into Hell*, except you underſtand it of his Soule, and of his Spirit? And where will you finde this Hell more agreeable to Scripture, and Reaſon, then as I have deſcribed it? and that *by his Spirit, he went to Preach to the ſpirits in priſon there.*

The third vaſt Priſon wherein the *evill Angells are ſecured unto the day of the generall Judgement*, is, *The Sea*; for there are *Sea Spirits*, as well as *Land Spirits*, or *Aëriall Spirits.* When the Diſci-

ples,

ples, being in a Ship, ſaw Chriſt coming towards them walking upon the Sea, the Text ſayes, *They were troubled, and thought they had ſeen a Spirit*, *Mat.* 14. 26. whereby it appears, That there were *Spirts* that did appear in the *Sea*, as well as on the *Land*. And in St. *Mathew* 8. we reade, *That the Devills being caſt out of the man which they had poſſeſſed, entred into an Heard of Swine, and carried them headlong into the Sea:* by which it ſeems, there was their abode. And in *Mark* 5. which by many circumſtances ſeem not to be the ſame ſtory, with this of St. *Matthew:* we reade, *Of a whole legion of Devills, entring into a Heard of no leſs then two thouſand Swine, and carrying them with great violence into the Sea:* theſe were *Sea Spirits*, whoſe abode was in the *Sea*, which is the third Priſon wherein theſe *evill Angells* are ſecur'd, and confin'd unto the Judgement of the great day, and with them, the ſouls of wicked men, both to be brought in, and judged at that general Aſſizes, which though they be not till then caſt into the Lake of everlaſting burnings; yet is their condition in the mean time woefull, and miſerable: 'Tis miſerable to conſider how wilfully they have forſaken their own mercy, and what opportunity they have loſt of preventing this their miſery, never to be recovered,

red, nor recalled : 'Tis miſerable to lye in Priſon, in ſuch a Priſon, and for ſuch Crimes of which they know themſelves they ſhall be found guilty at that day, and condemn'd to ſuffer the vengeance of everlaſting fire : 'Tis miſerable to ſee Hell open before them, and ready to receive them : 'Tis miſerable in the mean time to lye under the wrath of the Almighty, and under the torments of a wounded ſoule : Yet neither are the torments of the ſouls of wicked men, during this time of their ſeparation from their bodies all æquall ; as neither ſhall they be after the generall Judgement, as ſhall be ſhewed in the ſequel of this Treatiſe ; but in the mean while, (having ſhewed you the ſtate of the ſouls of wicked men) It now reſts that I ſhould ſhew you, What is the ſtate of the ſouls of juſt men, from the time of their ſeparation from their bodies, till the time of their re-union again with their bodies at the day of the Reſurrection.

And in anſwering to this inquiry, the Scripture gives us ſome light in foure expreſſions ; *When the body returns to duſt from whence 'twas taken, the ſpirit returns to God that gave it*, ſaith *Soloman*, *Eccleſ.* 12. 7. *The Angells receive it, and carry it into* Abraham's *boſome*, ſaith St. *Luke*, *cap.* 16. 22. *It is layd under the Altar*, ſaith St. *John*, *Rev.* 6. 9. *It is carried*

vied into *Paradiſe*, ſaith our Saviour to the penitent theeſe upon the Croſſe, *Luke* 23.43. All theſe are moſt comfortable, and heavenly expreſſions, ſetting forth the bleſſed and happy eſtate of the ſouls of the juſt which they enter into, when they are delivered from the burden of the fleſh, the great impediment of their perfection; yet they doe not all amount to this, That upon their ſeparation they paſs into the higheſt Heaven, and into the fruition of the immediate viſion of God, and that fulneſs of joy and glory, that they ſhall enter into at the laſt day, when it ſhall be ſaid unto them, *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, enter into the inheritance of the Kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world.* For we cannot imagine that theſe words are ſpoken onely in reference to the bodies, then newly rayſed out of their graves; but to the whole man, body and ſoule united together, and ſo to the entire perſons of them, *Come ye bleſſed, enter into the Kingdom.* For that of *Solomon, That the ſoule returns to God that gave it*, it is true; that is, It is taken up into the higher Heavens, and is in neerer communion with God then it was before, it is admitted neerer into his preſence, it is taken into his more immediate care to diſpoſe of it, in a place and ſtate of bliſs and felibow

city, of joy and glory, even presently upon the separation of it from the body: For that of Saint *Luke*, *That the Angells received the soule of* Lazarus: the meaning is, That he was gathered unto the rest of the faithfull, of which *Abraham* is said to be the Father, and carried to a place of rest, intimated by *Abraham's bosome: Sinus Patriarcharum recessus, quidam est quietis æternæ*, Ambr. For that of St. *John Rev.* 6. *Where he sees the souls of the Martyrs under the Altar:* the meaning is, That they were in a place of security, where no evill should touch them, as in the third of the book of *Wisedom*, *The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no evill shall touch them*, *v.* 1. The *Altar* was an *Asylum, a place of refuge and protection*, 1 Kings 2. 28. The souls of these Martyrs were *seen under the Altar*, to intimate their security, their safety, no evill might touch them.

As to that saying of our Lord, to the penitent theefe upon the Cross, *This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise:* I give these two answers. First, That Paradise is not so limited to the highest Heaven, where the Throne of God is, but that it may comprehend some other place adjacent to it, where he might be in joy and felicity with Christ, who as to his Divine Nature is every where; the

word ſignifieth, *A place of pleaſure:* and ſuch are the places aſſigned to be the receptacles of the ſouls of the juſt, when they are ſeparated from their bodies. I anſwer ſecondly, That for the ſouls of *Enoch* before the Law, and of *Elijah* under the Law, and of this penitent theefe under the Goſpel: I doe not deny, but they might have ſpeciall priviledge in the tranſlation of them, that the Lord in their examples might give good aſſurance to all beleevers, and to all the juſt that ever have, or ſhall live in any Age of the World, whether before the Law, under the Law, or ſince the Law, as well of their aſcenſion, and glorification, as of their reſurrection: As to this penitent theefe in particular, dying with him upon the Croſſe, that he might ſhew a *ſpecimen* of the power of his death, in ſaving, juſtifying, and glorifying penitent ſinners, though never ſo great offenders; but then we muſt remember withall, that theſe were peculiar priviledges of ſingular perſons: And, *Privilegia ſunt paucorum*, the Civill Law will tell us, *That Priviledges are the portion but of few*: This doth not weaken the truth of my aſcertion, That the ſouls of juſt men dying, doe not immediately upon the ſeparation of them from the body, paſs into the high-

eſt Heaven, nor to the higheſt glory, nor to that fulneſs of joy, which they ſhall enter into at the Reſurrection, when they ſhall be re-united to their bodies, and ſo both together ſhall be taken into the everlaſting habitations, and ſhall ſtand in the preſence of God, and enjoy the beatificall Viſion, in whoſe light they ſhall ſee light, when they ſhall ſee God face to face, in whoſe preſence is fulneſs of joy, and at whoſe right hand there are pleaſures for evermore. This the Royall Prophet by his ſpirit of Propheſie foreſaw long agoe, and rejoyced under the hope of it, *Pſal.* 17. 15. *I ſhall behold thy face in righteouſneſs: and when I awake, I ſhall be ſatisfied with thy Image:* When I awake, that is, in the morning of the Reſurrection, then I ſhall be ſatisfied with thine Image, then, and not till then, ſhall I be fully ſatisfied with thine Image.

But then here ariſeth another Queſtion, as there did of the ſouls of wicked men, *Where are the ſouls of the juſt in the mean while, between the time of their ſeparation from the body by death, and the re-union of them with the body at the Reſurrection? Where are they? What becomes of them? In what ſtate and condition have they their being? What is their imployment? What is their enjoyment?* To all theſe foure

Qua-

Quæries, I ſhall endeavour to give you ſome ſatisfaction, as touching the Place, the State, the imployment, and the enjoyments of ſouls ſeparated.

And as to the firſt of theſe, *The place of the ſouls ſeparation.* I ſhall not ſend you to the Elyſian fields of the antient Poëts to ſeek them: Nor to the Gardens nor Orchards of the *Heſperides*: Nor to the *Mahometan Paradiſes*; all theſe conceived and beleeved, *That the ſouls of vertuous and juſt men, as ſoon as they were ſeparated from the body, did paſs into ſome place of reſt and joy*, wherein they were not deceived; but for want of a more diſtinct knowledge of the Place where they had their being, and their ſtate in it, they ſet it forth by comparing it to the being in thoſe places which they conceived to be moſt happy, pleaſant, and joyous. But certainly, that which is moſt agreeable to reaſon in this caſe, and is no way repugnant to any Article of Faith, nor to any diſcovery in Scripture made to the contrary, is this, That the ſouls of the juſt being ſeparated from the bodies, doe paſs into thoſe high Heavens which are above the Starry Firmament, as the ſouls of wicked men doe paſs into the Regions of the Aire below it. For that there are Heavens above the

Starry

Starry Firmament, it cannot be denyed: two we reade of before we come to the Empyrean Heavens, where the Throne of God is, and where the Lord of Hosts, with all his holy Angells keeps his Court in Majesty and Glory: The lower-most of these is called, *Cælum aqueum*, The watery Heaven, from the clearness, and the transparancy of it: The other above that is called, *Cælum Crystallinum*, The Crystall Heaven, from the purity, and the pellucidity of it, for still the higher the Heavens are, and the neerer they approach to the Empyrean Heaven, where the Throne of God is, the more glorious are they, and the more noble the Inhabitants of them. Now between every of these Heavens, there is a vast space of infinite capacity; and it must needs be so, by reason of the greatness of their circumference, the least and lowest of them is of greater capacity and comprehension, then all this space that is between the Earth and the Starry Firmament, and the rest greater then it proportionably. Now I would ask; *Of what use these vast and comprehensive Heavens are, if this be not one, to be the receptacle of the soule of the just, when they are taken out of their bodies?* Natura nihil facit frustrà, *The God of Nature, the Creator of all things, hath made nothing in vain*: There is no part of the world

which

which he hath made, but he hath ſtor'd, and ſtock't it with Inhabitants ſuitable to it: The Earth he hath ſtor'd and ſtock't with Beaſts and Cattell; the Sea with Fiſhes, the Ayre with Fowle, and with Aeriall Inhabitants; every of the Spheres above it, with Starrs and Planets, which by their light, heate, influence, and motion divide the times, and Governe this inferiour world: The Starry Firmament that is ſpread out as a vaile between this inferiour, and the ſuperiour world, between theſe lower and the higher Heavens, it is peopled (as it were) with innumerable Golden Starrs of ſeverall magnitudes, ſpecious to behold, and pretious for their uſe and influence: The Empyrean Heavens, the higheſt of all the reſt, is ſtor'd and Inhabited with Angells, and Arch-Angells, Cherubims, and Seraphims, and the other Orders of thoſe Heavenly Courtiers that ſtand in the preſence of God, waiting his pleaſure, and ready to execute his will, and to fulfill his Word: Thus the whole Univerſe is repleniſhed with Inhabitants ſuitable to the places which the Great Creator and high diſpoſer of all things hath appointed for them. And doe theſe beautifull Heavens, the *Aqueall* and *Chryſtalline* Heavens, ſo ſpecious, and ſo ſpacious between the Starry Firma-

ment

men and the Empyrean Heaven, ſtand voyd and empty without Inhabitants? No, it cannot be, but they have their Inhabitants too, and *they are the ſouls of the Juſt, when they are ſeparated from their bodies by death and diſſolution, who being next unto the Angells in holineſs, are placed in receptacles next unto them in glory.* The *Chryſtalline* Heaven next and immediately under the *Empyrean* Heaven; and the *Aqueall*, or *Watry* Heaven next immediately under it; and as they have atteined to the degrees of purity here in this life, ſo are they diſpoſed of into the one, or into the other of them, neerer or farther off from the Throne of glory; for as after the Reſurrection, there ſhall be ſeverall and different degrees of glory; ſo in this ſtate of ſeparation, the ſouls ſeparated, ſhall be in ſeverall and different degrees of joy and happineſs, according as they are prepared for it, and have atteined to ſeverall degrees of holineſs and purity in this life, while they were in the body.

Secondly, *If you enquire into the ſtate of thoſe ſouls ſeparated, it muſt needs be bleſſed and glorious, ſuitable to the glory of thoſe Heavens wherein they are.* Where firſt, They are delivered from the burden of the Fleſh, the body, the very priſon wherein they were deteined, and ſole impediment of their perfection.

ſection. Secondly, They are freed from all ſin, and ſorrow, concupiſcence and corruption, from all temptations and ſollicitations from the world, the devill, and the fleſh, and from all the evill of this lower world which they have left behind them; and which now, *As that glorious Woman*, Rev. 12. 1. *they trample under their feet, all tears are wipt from their eyes, all ſorrow, and grief, and pain are flowne away, they dyed in the Lord, they are bleſſed, they reſt from their labours, and ſo they are in* Abraham's *boſome.* They are in the hand of God, as *Solomon* ſpeaks, *Wiſedom* 3. 1. *ſo that no evill ſhall touch them*; they are got above the reach of the malice of men or Devills, ἐκτὸς βολῆς (as the Greek Proverbe hath it) *out of the danger of the dart*: And ſo their ſtate agrees with that which St. *John* ſayes of them, *Rev.* 6. *That he ſaw them under the Altar*; yet all this is but their privative happineſs, conſiſting in their freedom from all evill, and their ſecurity from all danger; but they are in preſent poſſeſſion of a poſitive bleſſedneſs too in a great meaſure, and high degree of preſent joy and glory: Their very imployment is a part of their bleſſedneſs, which is no leſs then Angelicall, to laud, and prayſe, and magnifie the living Lord, to ſing *Hoſanna* to *Hoſannah's in the higheſt*, and *Hallelujahs to him that ſit-*

teth upon the Throne; to admire the glory, and the greatneſs, and the goodneſs, and the power, and the holineſs of the mighty Lord God, of which they have now a clearer ſight and apprehenſion then before; and in particular, his ſingular, and unſpeakable grace and goodneſs unto them, which hath done ſuch great things for them, as to bring them thither to triumph in the apprehenſion of it, and to rejoyce and glory in the ſence of it. I know not whether I ſhould rather ranke theſe things under their imployments, or their enjoyments, they are bleſſed duties which are both: With what ſweet contentation, and ſelfe ſatisfaction doe they converſe together in pure love and light? With what joy and comfort can they now remember the difficulties, and the dangers which they have paſt through in their comming thither? What temptations? what afflictions they have met withall? What ſtrong corruptions they have wreſtled with? What importunate luſts they have denied and ſubdued? What ſollicitations from the World, from the Fleſh, and from the Devill, they have reſiſted and rejected, and how now they bleſs themſelves that they have done ſo, and God that gave them grace and ſtrength to doe it? With what joy and prayſe doe they congratulate

one

one another in their happy victories over ſin and Satan, Death and Hell, and all the enemies of their ſalvation, and in their ſafe paſſage through all the dangers and difficulties that ſtood between them and Heaven; and that having eſcaped all the corruption that is in the world through Luſt, they are at length arrived to the Place where they would, even to the top of Mount *Syon*, the Place of their reſt and joy, where now they are taken into neerer Communion with God, then they could be, before they have more clear manifeſtation of him, ſweet influences from him, and union with him; they converſe with Angels, congratulating them in their happineſs, and with *Euges* of joy and prayſe, well-coming them into thoſe Heavens, the habitations of their happineſs, the Paradiſe of their joy and glory. And now, their Charity invites them to Pray *for the whole eſtate of Chriſts Church militant here on Earth, That the Lord would guide them, and keep them in the way of Truth, that he would bring them ſafe through all the dangers and difficulties that ſtand in the way between them and Heaven; that the Goſpel may have free paſſage through the world; that it may runne, proſper, and be glorious; that by it, he would call in all that are yet uncalled; that he would ſhortly accompliſh the number of his*

elect, and haſten his Kingdom; that they with them, and all others that ſhall depart out of this life in the faith and feare of his holy Name, may have their perfect conſummation, and bliſs, both in body and ſoule in his eternall and everlaſting glory:

Which is the third eſtate, in which immortall ſouls doe paſs their immortality, which begins from the day of the generall Judgement, and laſts from thence to all eternity.

Of which, though we had the Tongue of Men, or Angells, it is impoſſible to ſpeak to the full, and as the ſubject requires: *O Æternity, Æternity, How is the Heart aſtoniſh't, and the Mind ſwallowed up, that enters into the thoughts of it!* with the ſtate of the juſt, and the unjuſt in it; the joy and glory of the one, and the miſery and torment of the other: both which being unexpreſſible, I ſhall forbeare to enter into the deſcription of them, and in ſtead thereof, onely referr you to the words of the ſentences at the great day to be given upon them both; the ſentence of abſolution to the juſt on the right hand, and of condemnation to the wicked on the left, both which the Judge himſelfe that ſhall pronounce them, hath told us before hand, and left us *in terminis* upon record, *Mat.* 25.

And

And first, The sentence of absolution, because that shall be first pronounc't, that the wicked on the left hand may see Heaven opened, and have a sight of the joy and glory of the Celestiall Paradise, and see the just taken into it, and set down with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven, and themselves cast out*; that they may see what happiness they have lost, by wilfully forsaking their own mercy, and putting from them the Kingdom of Heaven offered unto them; and what happiness, joy, and glory the servants of God are arrived unto, whom they despised, to the greater aggravation of their sorrow and misery: Therefore shall the sentence of Absolution be first pronounc't in these comfortable words, *Come ye blessed of my Father, enter into the Inheritance of the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:* Every word carries in it life and glory: *Come ye blessed ones, take possession of a Kingdom*; Who? and what are we, that the Lord should doe so much for us (may they well say) as to give us a Kingdom? That's the day of which St. *Paul* writing to the *Thessalonians*, tells them, *Jesus Christ shall be admired in all them that beleeve*, 2 Thes. 1. 10. not onely by them, but in them, by Men and Angells, to see that the Lord hath exalted his poor,

humble,

humble, and despicable servants to so high honour, that he hath brought them hitherto: *Then shall the righteous shine as the Sunne in his brightnes,* (Wisedom 5. 1, 2, 3, 4.) *in the Kingdom of their Father.*

After this shall the Judge turne himselfe to the wicked, on the left hand, and pronounce against them the sentence of condemnation, in these words, *Ite maledicti, Goe ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devill and his Angels:* Every word full of death and terror; *Goe*, and *goe ye cursed*, and *goe into fire*, and *fire everlasting*, and *fire prepared*, (Isay 30. 33.) *and prepared for the Devill and his Angels: so these shall goe into everlasting torments, and the righteous into life eternall.* And this is the third estate of of immortall souls, and in this they shall abide for ever, without alteration, without end. And so I end my Discourse upon this Subject, in which, I may truely say with *Moses, I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing, Heaven and Hell*, that so you may chuse the better, and that you may doe it in time, while remedy may be had, *That you may live, and not dye; that you may be blessed, and not cursed; that your Portion may be in Heaven, and not in Hell*, Amen.

IT rests now, that I should speak something to the third part of the Text, in these words,

For I am no better then my Fathers.

But an intervenient occasion makes me interpose a few Lines for the satisfaction of some, of whom I heare they should say, *That in the former Discourse concerning the state of souls separated from their bodies, I Preach't New Doctrine; And ask't wherunto it was usefull?* Which exception hath two parts in it: The first, Concerning the newness of it. And the second, Concerning the uselesnes of it. To both which I must say something in way of vindication. And as to the first, *The newness of it*, To pass by all that hath been Written by the Learned Schoolemen, of the *Romish* perswasion, because they were of the *Romish* perswasion, (and yet, if we should reject all that is written by the learned of the *Romish* perswasion, because they were of the *Romish* perswasion) we shall doe our selves as much wrong as them; but to wave them, I could fill up my Page with the testimonies of Learned, and holy men unexceptionable, which have declared themselves of the same Judgement in this matter, That neither the souls of the just, nor the unjust, doe immediately upon the separation of them from the body,

pass

into the state of their eternall being, but into a state intermediate, and different from the third state, at least in degree, in which they doe remain untill the Resurrection, and the generall judgement: The one in Prison, the other in Paradise: The one amongst the evill Angells, the other among the good Angells: The one in the mouth of Hell it selfe, and in the beginnings of woe and torment in a great degree, and the other in the very entrance into the highest Heaven in bliss and joy, and happiness unspeakable, and glorious. I should make a long business of it here to cite, and to recite the testimonies of the Ancients in this matter; but to save my selfe and Reader that labour, let me intreat him to consult the Writings of an eminent Divine, well known and approved of in the Evangelicall Churches for Learned and Orthodox, and Professor of Divinity in the University of *Lausanna*, I meane *Bucanus*, a man as directly opposit to Purgatory and Popery, as Light is to Darkness, in his Common Places, *Loc.* 39. under the Title, *De Vita æterna*, he proposes this very Question in these words. First of the souls of the faithfull;

Anne animæ piorum hinc à corporibus separatæ perfectæ, & consummatæ beatitudine fruantur?

Whether

Whether the ſouls of the faithfull ſeparated from their bodies, doe preſently enjoy perfect bliſs, and conſummate happineſs.

Unto which he makes this Anſwer:

Satis ſit nobis ſcire illicò à diſceſſu è corpore, ſpiritum redire ad Deum, qui dedit illum, Eccleſ. 12. 7. *Eſſe cum Chriſto*, Philip. 1. 23. *In Paradiſo*, Luke 23. 43. *In pace*, Sapien. 3. 3. *In requie*, Heb. 4. 3. *In conſolatione*, Luke 16. 25. *In refrigerio*, Sap. 4. 7. *In ſecuritate*, Job 11. 15. *In manu Dei, ut minime attingit eum cruciatus*, Sapien. 3. 1. *In glorificatione*, Wiſd. 5. 1. *Thus Engliſhed*:

Let it be enough for us to know, That preſently upon the departure of it out of the body, the ſpirit returns to God that gave it; that it is with Chriſt, that it is in Paradiſe, that it is in Peace, in reſt, in comfort, in a place of refreſhment, in ſecurity, in the hand of God, ſo that no evill ſhall touch it; that it is in glory, all glorious expreſſions, ſetting forth the happy ſtate of the ſouls of the Saints which they paſs into, preſently upon the ſeparation of them from the bodies. But then, marke what follows, he comes in upon all this with an *adverſitive tamen*, notwithſtanding, which in anſwer to the Queſtion here propoſed, hath the force of a negative, for thus it followeth;

Quia tamen resurrectionem corporum expectant, & fruitionem plenissimam omnium bonorum quæ Deus promisit diligentibus ipsum, non in perfecta, & jam consummata, sed inchoata beatitudine versari dici possunt. Englished thus:

Yet notwithstanding, because they expect the resurrection of their bodies, and the most full fruition of all those good things, which God hath promised to them that love him, they may be said to be not in the full fruition of their perfect and consummate happiness, but in the beginning of it, or their happiness inchoated; and begun. Thus *Bucanus Com. Loc.* 39. *pag.* 447.

And for proofe of this, he alleageth the same Text of Scripture, that I have done, *Rev.* 6.9,10, 11. *Usque quo Domine? How long Lord, how long?*

Aquinas brings in a another Scripture for proofe of this truth, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. *From henceforth is layd up for me a Crowne of righteousnes, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give unto me at that day.* At what day? At the day of his glorious appearing, as it follows in the same Text, *When Christ shall appear in flaming fire to render vengeance.* 2 Thes. 1. 7. *When the Sonne of Man shall come in the Clouds, with power and great glory, and all his holy Angels with him:* That's the day of his appearing; at that

day

day ſhall St. *Paul* receive his *Crowne*, not before; till then, it is layd up for him. At that day ſhall thoſe ſouls under the Altar, before mentioned, receive their Crowns of Martyrdome alſo; for the preſent, there were *white Robes given* to every one of them; but not the *Crowns till that day*. The ſame alſo doth he affirme of the ſtate of the ſouls of wicked men ſeparated from their bodies; *Sic puniri ut etiam reſerventur in diem judicii longe aliis aſperioribus pœnis æternis, videlicet, in corpore, & anima cruciandi:* That they are ſo puniſhed here, during the time of their ſeparation, that they are alſo reſerved unto the Judgement of the great day, then to be tormented in body and ſoul with farr more ſharp and grievous puniſhments for evermore.

But if you would ſee more of Antiquity in theſe matters, and will be at the pains of it, doe but conſult *Athanaſius*, in an Epiſtle of his, cited by *Epiphanius*, Hæreſ. 77. and in his Book, *De Incarnatione Verbi*. St. *Cyrill*, *De recta fide ad Theodoſium*. *Oëcumenius*, and divers others, who in their Expoſitions of that Text in St. *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 3.19. *Who was put to death as concerning the Fleſh, but quickned by the Spirit. By which Spirit, he went and Preach't to the ſpirits which are in Priſon.* We

prove firſt, Chriſts deſcent into Hell; and upon the words following, That he Preach't unto the ſpirits, or ſouls detained in that Priſon. As Saint *Jude* ſaith of the evill Angells, *That they are in priſon, and bound in chains of darkneſs, reſerved unto the judgement of the great day:* The evill Angells, and the ſouls of wicked men, both in the ſame condition, both ſecur'd in Priſon, both in chains, both reſerv'd unto the judgement of the great day: And it will follow by the rule of oppoſits, That if the ſouls of the Saints and Martyrs be not yet in the fruition of their perfect and conſummate happineſs; then neither are the ſouls of wicked men in that exquiſite torment, which they are condemned unto, and into which they ſhall be caſt at the judgement of the great day: but that there is an intermediate eſtate, though that very wretched and miſerable, under which they lye, untill that day: And, I think, this is ſufficiently proved in both the branches of it by Scriptures, ſtrong and cleere for it, and by the jugdements of holy and learned men, commenting upon them; and ſo is a ſufficient anſwer to the firſt Part of the exception, and enough to free me from Preaching *New Doctrine*, and to declare that I am not alone in this Opinion, Of the intermediate eſtate of

ſouls

souls separated from the body, both of the just, and the unjust, nor walk in an untroden path, where no foot is gone before me.

The second Part of the exception lyes in this, *That it is useless:* That admitting these tenents be true, yet they are useless: It demands therefore *Whereto they are usefull?* To which I Answer.

Sol. The knowledge of them is usefull to many speciall purposes; particularly to these:

First, It is very satisfactory to the minde of every man (I think) that hath a soule, to know the state of it, both present and future; yea, to know as much of it, as is knowable: Knowledge is pretious, and a great delight unto the soule; *When wisedom entreth into thy heart, and knowledge delighteth thy soule*, saith *Solomon*, *Prov*, 2. 10. So knowledge is a delight unto the soule, and the more high and excellent the object is, about which it is conversant, the more excellent and pretious is the knowledge. But what more high and pretious object can there be, next unto God, and the Angells, then the spirits and souls of men? What more worthy to take up our most serious thoughts, and diligent studies, then the disquisition of those high things that doe concerne them? What more satisfactory then the attaining

ing of them in all thoſe things that are knowable.

Secondly, 'Tis uſefull for preſerving of men againſt Atheiſme, that bruitiſh ſinne, which doth ſo ſpread it ſelfe in the world, and invaded ſo great a part of the Sonns of men; for though they doe not ſpeak out plainly with their Tongues, yet how many of them ſay in their hearts and lives, *There is no God, nor Devill, nor Heaven, nor Hell, nor Angells, nor Spirits, nor ſouls of Men?* and all through their ignorance of this Point, That they cannot ſatisfie themſelves what becomes of the ſouls of men ſeparated from their bodies, through ſo long a tract of time as two, three, foure, or five thouſand years intermediate between the time of their diſſolution by Death, and their re-union again at the Reſurrection.

Thirdly, 'Tis uſefull to confirme men in the aſſurance of the Immortality of the ſoule, while it informes them what becomes of it, where it is, and what it does or ſuffers, where is the place of it, what the ſtate of it, what the imployments, what the enjoyments: Concerning all which, being before ignorant, and in the dark, they could not tell what to think of the ſouls of men, more then of bruits, of which *Solomon* takes notice, *Eccleſ.* 3. 20, 21.

20, 21. ſpeaking in their Language, *Who knoweth whether the ſpirit of Man aſcend upward? and the ſpirit of a Beaſt deſcend downward? All goe to one place, &c.* and therefore rann away in their own fancies, and vain imaginations, into divers errors, concerning the ſouls of men dying; ſome imagining they were annihilated, and altogether extinguiſhed: Some, that they were layd aſleep, as the bodies were, till the Reſurrection: Some, that they were tranſmigrated out of one body into another: Some one thing, ſome another; in the midſt of theſe doubtfull varieties, they began to queſtion, whether there were any difference between the ſouls of men, and of bruits, as *Solomon* here intimates; and for want of ſome more diſtinct knowledge in this matter, lived at a venture. Againſt all theſe errors and evills, the truths here delivered are a ſure and ſoveraigne remedy; the vain imaginations in which men rann away in the variety of their own fancies, concerning the extinction, annihilation, ſleeping, tranſmigration, &c. of the ſouls of men dying, all dye before theſe truths here delivered, and vaniſh away, and mens minds are ſetled and confirmed in the aſſurance of the immortality of the ſouls, while they doe diſtinctly informe them, what becomes

comes of them, into what receptacles they are received upon their separation, and in what severall states they pass their immortality.

Fourthly, It is usefull for admonishing of all men while they are in the body, to take care of their souls, and to provide for their future condition, to preserve them pure, that upon their separation, they may be taken up into those pure habitations, into which no unclean thing may enter, not to defile, or clog them with sinne and guilt, whereby they may be prest down, and hindered in their flight and passage into the higher Heavens, the glorious receptacles appointed for them.

Fifthly, It is usefull for the overthrowing of that *Limbus Patrum*, *Limbus Infantum*, and other roomes and spacious places in the Fabricke of the Popish Purgatory, which they have erected in their own imaginations for receptacles, wherein they would lodge the souls of men, when they are separated from their bodies, there to remain for a long tract of time in prison, and in pain, till they be sufficiently purged and punished, except there be some extraordinary means used for the reliefe, or release of them, or for the mitigating of their paine, either first, by a multitude of Masses

ses dayly said and sung for them. Or secondly, By the suffrages of the living, praying for the dead, from whence all these Epitaphs upon their Graves and Tombes, *Orate pro animâ*, Pray for the soule of such a one. Or thirdly, By some munificence, or eminent works of Charity done upon their account. Or fourthly, By applying unto them some of the works of *supererogation*, taken out of the Treasury of the Church, and by the Popes special favour confer'd upon them, &c. These imaginations (before the truth in this Discourse declared) fall to the ground, while it teacheth, That there is no such *Limbus Patrum* as they pretend to, nor need there any; but that their souls presently upon the separation of them, pass into the Etheriall Heavens, where they are in rest, and peace, in bliss, happiness and glory, *that the blood of Christ shed in due time, that was in the fulness of time*, was as effectuall to the purging, washing, saving, and sanctifying of the souls of the Fathers that lived in the first generation of the world, before his comming in the flesh, as it is now, for the purging, washing, saving and sanctifying of the souls of beleevers since his coming, and will be to the end of the world, that as to the vertue of his Death, Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension, *He was a*

comes of them, into what receptacles they are received upon their ſeparation, and in what ſeverall ſtates they paſs their immortality.

Fourthly, It is uſefull for admoniſhing of all men while they are in the body, to take care of their ſouls, and to provide for their future condition, to preſerve them pure, that upon their ſeparation, they may be taken up into thoſe pure habitations, into which no unclean thing may enter, not to defile, or clog them with ſinne and guilt, whereby they may be preſt down, and hindered in their flight and paſſage into the higher Heavens, the glorious receptacles appointed for them.

Fifthly, It is uſefull for the overthrowing of that *Limbus Patrum*, *Limbus Infantum*, and other roomes and ſpacious places in the Fabricke of the Popiſh Purgatory, which they have erected in their own imaginations for receptacles, wherein they would lodge the ſouls of men, when they are ſeparated from their bodies, there to remain for a long tract of time in priſon, and in pain, till they be ſufficiently purged and puniſhed, except there be ſome extraordinary means uſed for the reliefe, or releaſe of them, or for the mitigating of their paine, either firſt, by a multitude of Maſ-

ſes

ſes dayly ſaid and ſung for them. Or ſecondly, By the ſuffrages of the living, praying for the dead, from whence all theſe Epitaphs upon their Graves and Tombes, *Orate pro animâ*, Pray for the ſoule of ſuch a one. Or thirdly, By ſome munificence, or eminent works of Charity done upon their account. Or fourthly, By applying unto them ſome of the works of *ſupererogation*, taken out of the Treaſury of the Church, and by the Popes ſpecial favour conferr'd upon them, &c. Theſe imaginations (before the truth in this Diſcourſe declared) fall to the ground, while it teacheth, That there is no ſuch *Limbus Patrum* as they pretend to, nor need there any; but that their ſouls preſently upon the ſeparation of them, paſs into the Etheriall Heavens, where they are in reſt, and peace, in bliſs, happineſs and glory, *that the blood of Chriſt ſhed in due time, that was in the fulneſs of time*, was as effectuall to the purging, waſhing, ſaving, and ſanctifying of the ſouls of the Fathers that lived in the firſt generation of the world, before his comming in the fleſh, as it is now, for the purging, waſhing, ſaving and ſanctifying of the ſouls of beleevers ſince his coming, and will be to the end of the world, that as to the vertue of his Death, Paſſion, Reſurrection, and Aſcenſion, *He was a*

Lambe ſlaine from the beginning of the world, and whoſe going out have been from the beginning, and from everlaſting, as the Prophet *Micah* tells us; and as the Apoſtle declares him, *Jeſus Chriſt yeſterday, and to day, and the ſame for ever.*

Laſtly, It is uſefull for the anſwering of that great queſtion, with which we are ſo frequently, and ſo importunately urged by inquiſitive people, to ſhew them, *where Locall Hell is:* They cannot ſatisfie themſelves where Locall Hell is; and therefore they are apt to beleeve, there is none at all: This Diſcourſe ſatisfies them where it is; for the preſent, it is *where the evill Angells are confin'd, and ſecur'd in chains of darkneſs.* It is *where the ſouls of wicked men are impriſoned, both reſerved to the Judgement of the great day:* And where that is, this Diſcourſe tells; and not this Diſcourſe, or Treatiſe, but the Apoſtle St. *Jude, ver.* 6. St. *Paul, Epheſ.* 6. 12. *Epheſ.* 2. 2. St. *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 19. Thoſe places where thoſe evill Angells, and where the ſouls and ſpirits of wicked men are impriſoned, and ſecured untill that day, are the Locall Hell for the preſent. If you ask further, *Where Locall Hell ſhall be, after that great day?* I Anſwer, What need you look any further for it, then the vaſt ſpace conteining this wretched and wicked

in-

inferiour world wherein we now dwell. You know what St. *Peter* hath Propheſied concerning it, with all the Elements in it, all the Creatures, and works upon it, all the viſible Heavens over it, that they ſhall be conſumed by fire, 2 *Peter* 3. 10. *The Heavens ſhall paſs away with a noyſe, and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, and the Earth, with the works therein ſhall be conſumed by fire:* Now, when theſe things ſhall be deſtroyed, conſumed, annihilated, what need we look any further for a Locall Hell then this vaſt ſpace which theſe mighty bodies took up, when they were in being? When there ſhall be no Sunne to rule the day, nor Moon, nor Starrs to govern the Night, nor to divide the times; there ſhall be no diſtinction between day and night, but all ſhall be night without day, when the Sunne ſhall be no more, the Sea ſhall be no more, time ſhall be no more, the Earth ſhall be no more, all theſe viſible Heavens within the reach of the conflagration ſhall be no more, there's ſpace enough for the Locall Hell ſo much enquired after. I have deſcribed to you before the preſent Hell, the Priſons in which the evill Angells, and ſouls of wicked men with them are ſecur'd unto that day, and ſo are already in the beginnings of that Hell

and torment into which then they ſhal be plung'd, and ſent with an *Ite maledicti:* but that's the day of which St. *Jude* ſpeaks, unto which they were reſerved, when the ſentence ſhall be executed on them to the full, and they ſhall be caſt into the extremity of torment in the Lake of everlaſting burnings; and that's the Hell, the generall Hell, the Locall Hell, ſo much enquired after, we need not goe farr to ſeek it.

There are two plauſible Objections againſt this Opinion, which ſeem to thwart this, That this inferiour world wherein we now dwell, is to be the place of generall, and Locall Hell, after the diſſolution of it by fire.

1. The firſt is this, That this world ſhall not be then conſumed, but onely purged, and refined by that fire, the ſubſtance of it ſtill remaining.

2. The ſecond this, That though it ſhould be ſo; yet there ſhall be another world newly created in the roome of it, out of St. *Peter*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 10. *Nevertheleſs, we look for new Heavens, and a new Earth, according to his promiſe, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs.*

To the firſt, I would deſire you to conſult *Conradus Vorſtius* upon this Text of St. *Peter*, who urgeth twelve other preſſing Texts of Scripture

for

for the utter abolition of this lower world by the conflagration at the laſt day; which are ſeconded by the conſent of many Fathers alſo, *Convertentur in nihilum*, (ſaith Saint *Jerome*) they ſhall be battered into nothing. *Annihilabuntur*, (ſaith St. *Hilary*) they ſhall be annihilated: *In nihilum redigentur*, (ſay the recognitions of *Clemens*;) but to goe no farther then St. *Peters* own words in the Text and context, they bear it cleer enough for the Abolition, not the Purgation of this world by the conflagration: For doth he not ſay punctually, *ver.* 7. *That the Heavens and Earth which are now, are kept in ſtore, and reſerv'd unto fire againſt the day of Judgement?* And doth he not ſay plainly, *ver.* 10. *That accordingly, the Earth, with the works therein ſhall be burnt up?* not barely *burnt*, but *burnt up*. Doth he not come to particulars, and ſhew, *Thoſe great bodies ſhall be deſtroyed, the Heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noyſe, and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, the Earth burnt up?* And *ver.* 12. *That all theſe things ſhall be diſſolved*: but diſſolution doth not mend a Fabrick, as *Serrarius* well urgeth againſt *Suarez* in this caſe. And *ver.* 13. *That we are to look for new*: Put all theſe expreſſions together, *They are reſerved, and kept*

kept for fire; they shall be burnt up; they shall pass away with a great noyse, melt with fervent heat, be dissolved; and all this while, and amongst them all, not one word of purgation, purifying, or refining, or reserving the substance of it: It is clear, St. *Peter* himself speaks not of a *refining*, in respect of the qualities; but an utter abolition of the substance it selfe of this old world: As the Pageant being finished, the Stage is taken away; so all the Tragedies which are Acted upon the Stage of this world, being ended, the Stage shall be pulled down, broken in pieces, burnt with fire, as an Engine or Fabrick of which there is no more use, it shall be no more.

But what shall we say to the other Objection, raysed out of the words of St. *Peter*, ver. 13. *But we look for new Heavens, and a new Earth, according to his promise, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*

Which words seem to import, That though this present old World shall then be dissolved, consumed, burnt up; yet (if there doe not spring up (as a Phœnix) out of the Ashes of it another World, yet) God will Create another new World in the room of it, and then we are but where we were, in respect of the space, and place, and room

we

we ſhould have for Locall Hell, theſe new Heavens and Earth will take it up.

To this I Anſwer, That indeed, we doe look for *new Heavens, and a new Earth*, according to his promiſe, and according to St. *Peters* words, and ſhall enjoy them too, and dwell in them. But what are thoſe Heavens? but thoſe higheſt Heavens, the Celeſtiall Paradiſe, the glorious habitations of the Saints, and of Gods Elect, which he hath prepared for them from the beginning of the world, and into which he will receive them at that day, when he ſhall ſay unto them, *Venite benedicti: Come ye bleſſed, enter into the Kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world:* and theſe are called *New*; not in reſpect of their new making, but in reſpect of our new taking poſſeſſion of them (by a moſt happy change) for our new habitations: So that, New Heavens, and New Earth, in this place ſignifieth no more, but a New Habitation, farr more glorious then this that we now have in this lower world; that as now, the Earth under us, and the Heavens over us, are the place of our Habitation; ſo, after theſe ſhall be deſtroyed, that we may not fear we ſhall want a habitation, he tells us, We ſhall have another, and a better Habitation, farr more excellent and

glorious

glorious then this is, which in allusion to these, he calls, New Heavens, and New Earth, to make us know, we shall be no losers by the change: And for this exposition, I might quote you Authors enough, *Ireneus*, *Hilary*, *Hypolitus*, and others; but I will cite you a whole Library of Fathers and Schoolemen, and all in one, who was himselfe a living Library, I meane the late Learned and Reverend Lord Bishop of *Worcester* Doctor *Prideaux*, *Regius Professor* in the University of *Oxford*, and *Rector* of *Exeter Colledge*, in which I lived under his Government some years: He Preach't at the Court upon this very Text, 1 *Peter* 3. 13. his Sermon is in Print, and intitled, *The Christians expectation*; where all along, he proves, *The New Heavens*, here mentioned, to be no other, *but the highest Heavens*, appointed for the Habitations of the Saints in glory.

But what need we trouble our selves to search the Libraries of the Fathers and Schoolemen, to ask their Judgement and Consent in this matter? St. *Peter* himselfe has cleered the Point in question to our hands, That *the Heavens*, in the Text, though here called *New*, can be no other, but those glorious Heavens above, now in being: For thus he further commendeth them to us, *That*

they

they are Heavens wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs: he doth not ſay, *wherein ſhall dwell righteouſneſs*, in the future; but *wherein now dwelleth righteouſneſs*, in the preſent Tenſe. We cannot ſay of Heavens hereafter to be Created, That righteouſneſs now dwelleth in them, before they are in being: But the Apoſtle ſaith expreſsly of the Heavens which we look for, *That righteouſneſs now dwelleth in them*, therefore they are now in being, long ſince Created from the beginning. That which is in expectation, and the newneſs here mentioned, is not to be underſtood in reſpect of the making of them, or the future being of them, as if they were not yet in being; but in reſpect of our entrance into them, our taking Poſſeſſion of them, and Habitation in them, ſo they ſhall be new to us. I know there are of the other Opinion, not a few, for the new Creation of a new World, new Heavens, and a new Earth in the roome of this preſent World, when it ſhall be aboliſht and diſſolved: But ſee how weakly they proſecute that fancy, when they would confirme themſelves, and others in it: They tell us of what excellent uſe it ſhall be; As firſt, For a Monument of what hath been. Secondly, For a receptacle of ſuch as had de-

ſerved neither Heaven nor Hell; ſuch as they thought were not capable of the one, and they thought it pitty they ſhould be condemned to the other; ſuch as Infants, dying without Baptiſme, Idiots, and ignorant people, that wanted capacity to underſtand the truth; honeſt morall men, which never had the way of Goſpel-ſalvation made known unto them, ſuch as *Plato*, *Ariſtotle*, *Plutarch*, *Cato*, *&c.* Thirdly, That it might be an out-let, or as it were, a Country Houſe for the Saints and Angells to come down into, where to ſolace themſelves for their recreation, and the like; all but *Rabbinicall* fancies, and *Jeſuiticall* ſurmiſes, without any ground any where, but in their own imaginations: As if the Lord had not roome enough wherein to diſpoſe of his Saints and Angells, and all his reſpectively, except he ſhould make another new World to entertein them in. Whereas our Saviour tells us, *Their receptacles were prepared for them from the beginning of the world*, Mat. 25. *Known to the Lord are all his works from the beginning*; and he will not have ſo many ſupernumeraries in the end of the World, as that the Fabrick made in the beginning for the reception of them, ſhould not ſerve the turne. But to ſatiſ-

ſie the doubtfull in this ſcruple, let it be well minded what St. *Peter* ſaith further here in this Text, *We look for new Heavens*, not for a new Heaven, in the ſingular; but *for new Heavens*, in the Plurall number: By which it appears, there are more Heavens then one in the World above, for the Lord to diſpoſe of his Saints and Angells in; a juſtification to what I have ſaid in the former Part of this Treatiſe, wherein I affirmed, That there are more Heavens then one above the Starry Firmament. I named two between it, and the Empyrean, or fiery Heaven, where the Throne of God is; and who knows how many more there may be? Let no man object againſt this, what St. *Paul* ſayes of his *Rapture into the third Heaven*, and therefore there are no more; that doth not follow, A man is taken up into a third place,; therefore there is not a fourth, nor a fifth: It would follow rather the contrary, that there were: For, *Non dicitur primus niſi in ordine ad ſecundum*: A firſt is not ſaid to be ſo, but in order to a ſecond, and ſo forward; *In numeris ordinalibus*, in numbers of order, till you come to the laſt. I ſay farther, that in ſuch accounts, a reſpect is to be had where you begin to number, according to which the ſame place may fall in account to be

first, or second, or third, or fourth. Thirdly, The Heavens are said to be more, or less, as they are distinguished and divided. So *Aristotle* numbers but eight, *Ptolomie* nine, *Purbacchius* ten, *Maginus* eleven, and this distinction they make from the distinct motions they have observed in the wandring and fixed Starrs. Our Christian Divines generally number but three, and that from Saint *Pauls rapture*, mentioned before: Yet a Reverend and Learned Bishop of ours, I mean Bishop *Bilson*, in his Survey of *Christs sufferings*, numbers foure, and that fourth to be that which is called, *The Heaven of Heavens*: For, *That Christ is said to have ascended farr above all Heavens*, Ephes. 4. 10.

Thus you see here are great varieties of Opinions touching the number of the Heavens, and the Celestiall Orbs: And yet in the midst of all this variety, the difference is not so great, but it may be fairly reconciled, so as there shall be found no contradiction at all betwixt them: as thus, Be they as many as they will, they may all conveniently be divided, or sorted into these three Heavens, or compages of Heavens (if you will:) The Aëriall, the Sydereall, and the Etheriall Heavens: Under the first of these is comprehended

prehended all that ſpace, which from the Earth upwards, reacheth unto the Moone, the loweſt of the Luminaries of Heaven, Foules flying in it, are called, *Foules of Heaven*, Mat. 6. 26. Under the ſecond is comprehended all thoſe Orbes and Spheares wherein the Starrs are placed; whether the fixed, or the wandering Starrs: The Starrs are called, *Starrs of Heaven*. And under the third is comprehended all that infinite ſpace, which is above the Starry Firmament, and the Sydereall Heavens, be it never ſo great, or the Heavens in it never ſo many; and ſo in this three-fold diviſion of the Heavens, into Aëriall, Sydereall, and Etheriall, we ſhall eaſily reconcile Aſtronomy and Divinity together, the Mathematicall Account, with the Theologicall. In it St. *Paul* may finde *his third Heaven*, Biſhop *Bilſon* his fourth, *Ariſtotle* may finde his eight, *Ptolomy* his nines, *Purbacchius* his tenn, and *Maginus* his eleven, and neither of them wrong other in the reckoning, ſo they ſeek them while they are there in being; but that muſt be before the Conflagration here in this Text Propheſied of by St. *Peter*. For in the great burning here ſpoken of, the two former, the Aëriall, and the Sydereall Heavens, with

the

the whole compages of them, will be destroyed, burnt up, dissolved, they all fall under the fury of the Conflagration. St. *Peter* hath exprest the manner of it in tragicall expressions, filling the heart with terror and astonishment to think on: The burning of a House, a Towne, a City, is a lamentable sight. At the burning of *Jerusalem*, and the Temple, *Titus* himself, which was the executioner of it, lamented greatly, and was sore grieved, and troubled at so lamentable a spectacle: But what was that, in comparison to this, not so much as the burning of a Cottage in comparison of it selfe? The burning of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, *Admah*, and *Zeboim*, foure Cities in the Plaine, with fire and brimstone from Heaven, was a Type of this burning, but slenderly representing it, as so many bonfires to a mighty burning. The Prophet *Isaiah*, fore-telling the horrible destruction of the King of *Assyria*, shadows it forth under the type and title of *Tophet*, or *Hell*, *Isay* 30. 33. in terrible termes as before remembred, *For Tophet is prepared of old: yea, even for the King it is prepared*, (meaning the King of *Assyria*, which in his close siege against *Jerusalem*, lay there with his Army, and went off with the loss of one hundred fourescore and five

thousand

thousand men) *he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire, and much wood: the breath of the Lord, as a ſtreame of brimſtone, doth kindle it.* This *Tophet* was a Valley on the South ſide of *Jeruſalem*, (*Joſh.* 18. 16.) in which the Idolatrous *Jews* did burn their Children in the fire, *to offer them up in ſacrifice unto* Moloch, contrary to the expreſs command of God, *Levit.* 20. 1. It was called *Tophet*, from *Toph*, which in the *Hebrew* ſignifieth *a Drumme*; from whence *Tophet* the diminutive of it ſignifying, *a little Drumme*, or *Tabret*; becauſe, while theſe Children were burning, the Idolatrous Prieſts beate upon theſe Drummes, and playd on theſe Tabrets, partly for the ſolemnity of the ſervice, and partly, to drowne the crying, and ſhreeking of the poor Innocents in the flames: It was the Land of one *Hinnom*, therefore called, *The Valley of* Hinnom; and in the New Teſtament, *Gehenna*, and taken for Hell; *Matth.* 5. 21.: *Matth.* 8. 9. *Joſiah* had ſuch indignation againſt this Idolatrous place, that in his great Reformation, 2 *Kings* 23. 10. He defiled it, he made it the very ſinke, and dunghill of the City, a place for the execution of Malefactors, and where thoſe which were denyed burial, were caſt out, and lay unburied, a place

where

where to carry and cast all the noysom Carrion of the City, where the Foules of the Ayre, and the beasts might Prey upon them; yet, for feare they should corrupt the Ayre, and cause infectious diseases, there were continuall fires kept allwayes burning, to consume the bones, and putrified Carkasses, whether of men or beasts, which were cast out there: And for the loathsomness of the place, and the continuall burnings in it, it was called *Gehenna*, *Hell*, and *Hell fire*: Unto which, it is probable, our Saviour alludes, when describing *Hell*, he saith, *The Worme never dyes, nor the Fire never goeth out*: The *Worme* that is bred out of those putrefactions, which farther gnawing, causeth farther putrefaction, never ceaseth to administer matter of burning to the fire, nor the fire ever goeth out, or ceaseth to feed it selfe upon it: Yet, as there are divers degrees of heate in the fire, and the fiery furnace into which the three Children were cast, was heat *seven times hotter, then at other times*: So it is cleere by the Scriptures, *That the torments of the damned, are not all equall.*

We reade of the Servant, *That knew his Masters will, and did it not*: And of another, *That knew it not, and did it not*. The former was to be

be beaten with many ſtripes: The latter was to be beaten too, *but* with fewer ſtripes. The Stoicks were farr out in their Moralls, when they taught; *Peccata eſſe æqualia*, That all ſinns were equall. Our Saviour his expoſition of the ſixth Commandement, hath taught us otherwiſe, *Matth.* 5. 22. when he ſaith, *That whoſoever is angry with his brother unadviſedly, ſhall be in danger of the judgement: and whoſoever ſaith unto his brother, Racha, ſhall be worthy to be puniſhed by the Councell: but whoſoever ſhall ſay unto his brother, Thou foole, ſhall be in danger of Hell fire.* Where under the forme of theſe three Courts among the *Jews*: Firſt, The Court of three, or the *Trium-viri*, here called, *The Judgement*, which had the hearing and puniſhing of ſmaller matters. Secondly, The Court of three and twenty, here called, *The Councell*, which had the hearing and puniſhing of crimes of a higher nature. And thirdly, Of the higheſt Court of all, conſiſting of threeſcore and eleven, which they called their *Sanedrim*, which Judged the higheſt matters, and puniſhed by death it ſelfe, whether by hanging, beheading, ſtoning, or burning in *Gehenna*, before mentioned; he cleerly ſheweth, that there are great differences of ſin, and ſinners; and ſo

there shall be also of punishments proportionably, under which the damned shall be held, and tormented in Hell for evermore. Unto which, the enlargement of *Tophet*, by the destruction of this world, in the great Conflagration, shall be much conducing, in giving convenient roome for it. And as the punishment, and torment of the damned in Hell shall be of divers, and different measures, and degrees; *Potentes potenter cruciabuntur*: Mighty men shall be mightily tormented; so, that the joy and glory of the Celestiall Inhabitants, shall be as different, in measure, and degree, is clearly revealed in Scripture. *They that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and they that turne many to righteousness shall shine as the Starrs for ever and ever*, Daniel 12. 3. Which Saint *Paul* in 1 *Cor.* 15. further confirmes, and more cleerly explicates this, *There is one glory of the Sunne, another of the Moone, and another glory of the Starrs: for one Starr differeth from another Starr in glory*, ver. 41. And then to prevent all mistakes, and disputes about it, he applyes it to this very purpose, *verse* 42. *Even so is the Resurrection from the dead.* And to this doth this Text of Saint *Peter* well agree, where it sayes, *We look*

for

for new Heavens, in the Plurall Number, (who knows how many) Ethereall Heavens, but he that made them? but Heavens they are, therefore more then one, and this neceſſary for two Reaſons: Firſt, For the vaſt ſpaces that are required to diſpoſe of the Cæleſtiall Inhabitants in, ſpaces which no man can meaſure for multitudes, which no man can number.

Secondly, For the orderly diſpoſing of them in thoſe Heavens according to the dignity, and glory; the purity, and holineſs of thoſe that ſhall be placed in them. *For as one Starr*; ſo, *one Heaven, differeth from another in glory. In my Fathers Houſe are many Manſions*; thoſe Manſions not of equall beauty and magnificence; variety of Manſions for variety of Inhabitants; to ſome are reſerved Crowns, to other Laurells; ſome are clothed in White, the immediate *pediſſequæ* of the Lambe, which follows him whetherſoever he goeth: others attend at a farther diſtance. In the ſecond and third Chapters of the *Revelation*, there are ſeven ſeverall rewards aſſigned *to them that overcome*. In the nineteenth of Saint *Luke*, we ſee, upon the Account given by the ſervants of the improve-

ment of the Talents committed to their truſt, *One is made Ruler over ten Cities: another over five*: every one hath his reward (according to his care and faithfulneſs) proportioned unto him. But what need we multiply words, in a caſe ſo cleer; conſider but the preſent ſtate of the Cæleſtiall Inhabitants, the holy Angels, now in glory; and from thence you will eaſily collect, what the ſtate of the Saints ſhall be after the Reſurrection: you will finde them diſtributed into ſeverall Claſſes, or Orders of Angels, in dignity and glory, one above another. For we reade of Angells, and Arch-Angells, of Cherubims, and Seraphims, of Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers, &c. all which are ſo many Orders, and ſeverall Degrees of Angells excelling one another in dignity and glory. And if there be ſuch graduall diſtinctions now, of the Angells divided, and diſtributed into ſo many Orders, one above another in the Cæleſtiall Hierarchy; certainly much more muſt it needs be ſo, after the Reſurrection, when the number of the Cæleſtiall Inhabitants ſhall be ſo infinitely augmented by the acceſs of all the Saints, and elect people of God, which have been

been from the beginning of the world, and ſhall be to the laſt man that ſhall ſtand upon the Earth at that day. And it were ſtrange, That all theſe ſhould be limited to one Heaven to be diſpoſed in, which is all that ſome of you ſeem to allow: but that Saint *Peter* hath better inform'd us in the Text, when he ſayes, *We look for new Heavens*, Heavens in the Plurall, Heavens enough for the Creator to diſpoſe of all his people in, and to ſort them ſo, as that they ſhall all be in thoſe Heavens, which are moſt convenient for them, and ſuitable to them, and for them to be Inhabitants in, and all theſe new too; not becauſe then newly Created: but becauſe we ſhall then newly take Poſſeſſion of them, and ſo they ſhall be new to us; not in themſelves, *For they were Created of old, from the beginning, from the foundation of the World.* Let our Saviours own words, giving poſſeſſion of them, ſatisfie, and ſilence all further diſpute, or queſtionings in this matter, *Mat.* 25. 34. with which I ſhut up this Diſcourſe, *Come ye bleſſed Children of my Father, enter into the Inheritance of the Kingdome prepared for you, from the foundation of the World.*

FINIS.